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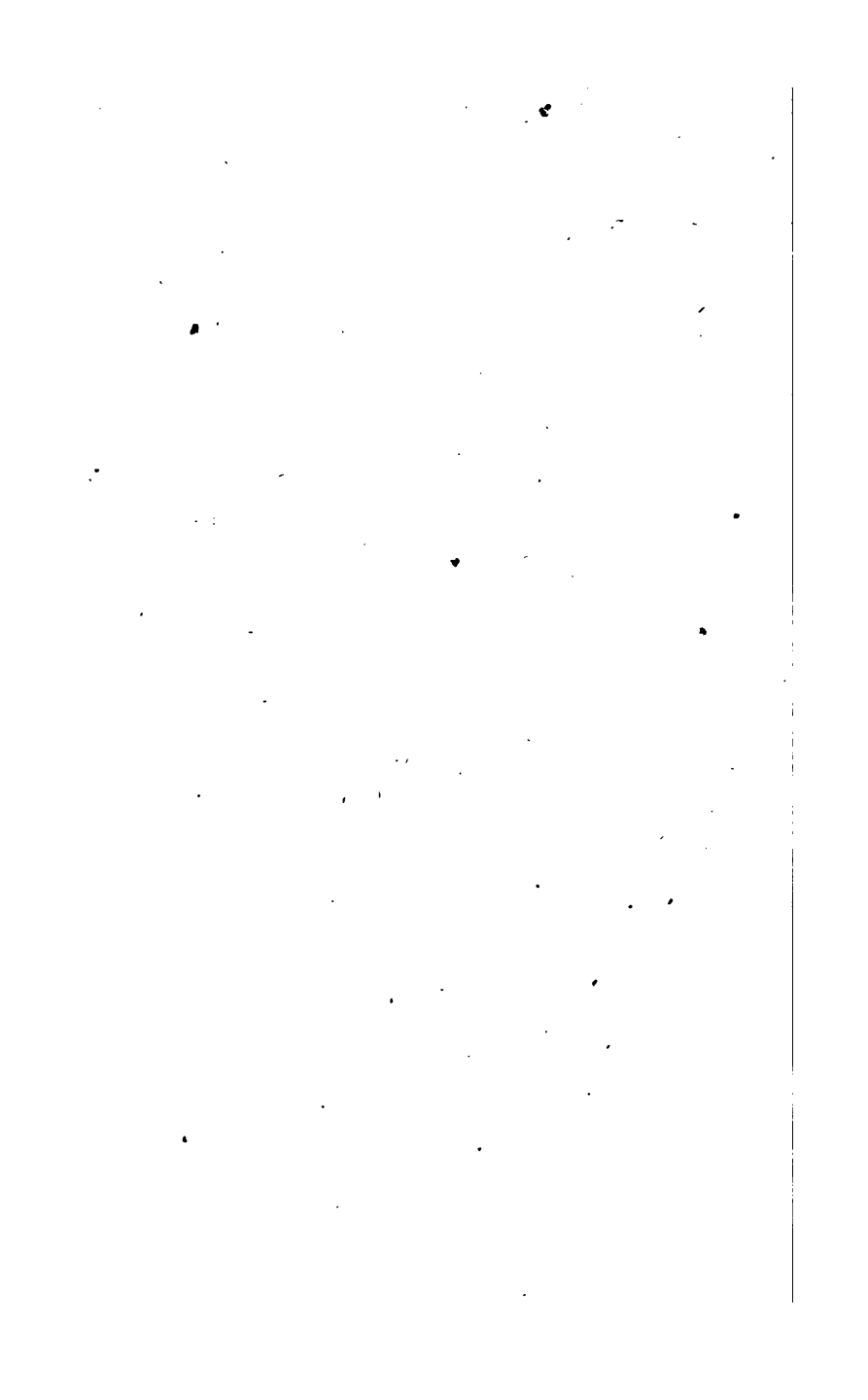
1945

—M—









A SERIES of
GENUINE LETTERS
BETWEEN
HENRY and FRANCES.

Felices ter et ampliùs
Quos irrupta tenet copula; nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis,
Supremâ citiùs solvet amor die.
HOR. LIB. I. OD. 13.

THE THIRD EDITION,
Revised, Corrected, Enlarged, and Improved,
By the AUTHORS.

VOL. I.



L O N D O N:
Printed for W. JOHNSTON, in Ludgate-Street.
MDCCCLXVII.

249. v. 35.

SOON after the First edition was published in Ireland, the following letter appeared in Faulkner's Journal; the writer unknown.

To Mr. ABRAHAM BRADLEY, Bookseller.

S I R,

I HAVE read the Series of Letters between HENRY and FRANCES, lately published at your shop, and have never met with any thing in the literary way which amused or entertained me so much. Whoever is capable of forming any judgment upon writing, must acquiesce in the title of their being GENUINE; for tho' there are many subjects treated of in this collection, which are not the proper business of lovers, yet there is apparently the same stile, spirit, and gallantry running thro' the whole. I never read higher love-letters in my life, without the bombast of romance, or the levity of novel; they are composed of the most elegant fondness, lively wit, just sense, refined moral, and ingenious criticism; all which address is neither of use or usage in modern amour; but this pair of polite and happy lovers seem to have used their passions as they were designed by Providence, to inspirit their reason, and to actuate their moral, not to subject these to their arbitrary dominion. I do not know the authors, and have therefore no other method of conveying my sentiment and approbation of their writings, but by directing this letter to you.

I am, Sir, &c.

T. B.

THE following criticism was sent to HENRY by a friend of his. It was wrote by a clergyman of taste and literature, to whom he had lent the books, and desired his opinion of them.

I have read the Letters of HENRY and FRANCES with pleasure and improvement. They have all the *Naïveté* which recommends principally that kind of writing, and which is wanting to Pliny, Balzac, and Voiture. They have more wit and moral than those and Tully taken all together. They have indeed more faults; are more incorrect than any of them; which makes them carry the true air of originals, which they certainly are. They both write the English Language in its greatest purity; shall I say she excels in expression, wit, and spirit? Partiality to the sex, who beat us all to nothing in conversation and letter-writing, may incline me to judge so: possibly a woman of taste and sense may prefer his. Her * reply to an unbecoming one of his, (not in the collection) is a master-piece of good sense, virtue, wit, spirit and language. Abelard corrupted his pupil, she reforms her preceptor. The truth is, I admire this collection, because they are real letters, wrote *ex re natâ*, by an unaffected, sensible and witty pair.

* Letters liv. and lv.

H E N R Y
T O T H E
E D I T O R.

* S I R,

I SEND you by the bearer a Collection of the Letters, which you complimented us so much upon, when you were last at my house; you should have had them before this, but my *clerk* had not finished them till yesterday. I should have stiled him *secretary*, for the greater air of the thing.

You will find several chasms in the series of our correspondence, occasioned by our destroying, on both sides, all the letters which related to private history, or private business; except a few which contained some moral or other sentiment; and, in general, we neither of us preserved any of the other's letters, which we did not think might be an entertainment to us to read over again, at some other time, which was a manner I particularly have very often employed myself in; for whenever I found my resolution

* This letter is in the first edition.

vi HENRY to the EDITOR.

stagger, with regard to our marriage, or was offended at any of her letters, which betrayed impatience, caprice, or suspicion of my love, I used to take out a parcel from this collection, sometimes more or less, according to the disorder in my affection, and so read away till I had swallowed the *Quantum sufficit*, to restore the full health of my attachment to her.

And indeed it would amuse you greatly to hear the many ingenious arts I have made use of, for the first two or three years of our loves, to preserve my constancy towards her; and I have actually, several times, by the meer force of contemplation, worked myself into such an enthusiasm about her knowledge, genius, and understanding, that, as you will casually observe, in going through this collection, I have wrote Latin, philosophy, and metaphysics to her, during the paroxysms of the fit; by which uncommon proceeding, as I say in another place, * “I reasoned myself into a real passion for her.” —I will tell you why,—In truth I could never have the least enjoyment of life, without the sweet indulgence of fond affections. All the pleasures of sense, the beauties of nature, and the pomp of grandeur, to me are tasteless, as to a sick man; without a

* Vid. the envelope of his will, 2d par. letter cclxxxiii.

certain

HENRY to the EDITOR, vii

certain tenderness of sentiment, a something, which, as Persius expresses it, *circum præcordia ludit*, and gives a relish to them all. I had quitted an engagement of this sort, about a year before I entered into this, because there were several reasons which made it highly improper to continue in it; and you cannot conceive what a wretched vacuum of life I passed during that interval.

† “I rather passed than spent the day,” before I could find out any person whose sense or taste was agreeable enough to fix my attachments. I led an unsatisfactory, vague, dissipated kind of life, during this interregnum; my passions and affections all in perfect anarchy, and, like the frogs, petitioning for a king: my mind was listless, and my time sauntered away without any rule prescribed, or purposed end: at last, like the worn-out simile of the Patriarch’s dove, I found a resting-place, and grew timorous of hazarding again a flight back into the troubled ocean of life.

Many of the letters are misplaced, for want of dates, and even those which have them, the emanuensis has contrived to render obscure, meerly by his regularity; for as we corresponded for several years, three times a week, without intermission, by copying,

† Vid. letter lxiy. 2d line.

viii HENRY to the EDITOR.

the letters, according to their dates, he has introduced this confusion, that he has placed a letter from Frances, suppose, because it was dated, for instance, the fourth of the month immediately succeeding the date of one of mine, suppose of the second or third; whereas he should have gone on to one of her's dated the sixth; for by not allowing the interval of a post, the latter could not be an answer to the former; so that by taking them successively, rather than alternately, he has made several of them appear like a game of cross purposes, where the answer never corresponds with the question, except it be by chance.

However, I have endeavoured to set these matters right, as well as I could, by numbering the letters, which you are to attend to solely, and not to the pages; but, doubtless, several mistakes have slipped my attention, which I must leave to your own observation to correct.

In return for all this trouble, which I have taken on your account, I hope for your critical indulgence, while you read over these hasty and incorrect pieces, wrote in the hurry of an omnipost correspondence, many of them in the midst of business, or company, and several in the height of sickness, or in the intervals of whist; "*Aliter enim scribimus,*

HENRY to the EDITOR. ix

*“ scribimus, quod eos solos quibus mittimus,
“ aliter quod multos lecturos putamus.” **

If I had taken the pains of copying out these letters myself, I could probably have put many of them in a better dress, and letter † ccxxxvii I should have left out entirely, because I have since been informed, that the natural principle, which I presumed upon in that letter, about the increase of matter, is false; but I shall let it go along with several others, which I think not worth reading, because the omission of them might break in upon the thread of the correspondence, and because I promised to send you, *bonâ fide*, every letter which had been preserved; and this I take to be the best way of dealing with a friend, to throw ourselves on his mercy, for the whole of our fault, rather than make a partial palliation by secreting any part of it.

I send you the originals, along with the copy, that you may compare them together, which I confess I was too lazy to do; but should be pleased if any one else would take the trouble of.

There are four letters in this collection, and but four, which have been wrote to

* Cic. Ep.

† This is ccxii. in this edition.

x HENRY to the EDITOR.

three different persons, letters * clxxxvii, cxc, xcii, xciii; for having occasion to write to those persons upon the same subjects, the same chain of thought and reasoning naturally occurred; but, as they were wrote originally to Fanny, I thought they had a right to take their places in the course of this collection.

Adieu!

HENRY.

* In this edition these letters are cciv. ccvii. ccix, and the fourth is not inserted.



THE
EDITOR
TO THE
PUBLICK.

* **I** HERE present you with a genuine correspondence, which passed for several years, between a gentleman and lady of the kingdom of Ireland; though the scene has been laid in England, by the authors, when the first copy was made out, as they designed to keep themselves unknown, for reasons which may be collected from some parts of this address, and several passages in their letters..

I endeavoured to prevail on the parties to take the trouble of digesting this collection into a more regular series than they are, at present, offered to you in; but the various business and family concerns which they are engaged in, in the country, would not afford

* This letter is in the first edition.

them leisure: and, indeed, there seems to obtain, in them both, a certain indolence of mind, proceeding from a philosophic acquiescence in their very narrow fortunes, which would prevent either of them from giving themselves so much trouble as a task of this kind might require.

But though they would not condescend to be compilers, even of their own works, I was in hopes that they might be prevailed upon to undertake a work of genius, by filling up the chasms, which appear too often, in the course of these writings: but this too they refused me, from a certain ingenuousness in their natures, which proceeded so far, that though there were a good number of entertaining letters wrote, since the last of these, yet they would not suffer them to be inserted, because they were written since the first design of publishing this collection; which, however, was not any thought of theirs, during the whole course of their correspondence, but hinted to them by Lady O——, so often mentioned, with honour due, in these letters, and who promised to prevail on Lord O——, a nobleman of distinguished sense, learning, and classical taste, and who has sunk many eminent titles of both kingdoms, in the

private character of the man, * to revise and correct them for the press; but as higher avocations have prevented them from appearing before the publick with that honour and advantage, I have obtained leave, after a twelvemonth's sollicitation, to dispose of them after what manner I please.

But I have been so just to the authors, and to the public too, that I have not left out even the most trifling letter, which came to my hands; my design being not merely to give you a collection of letters, but to present you with the genuine pictures of two persons, whose sense, wit, and universal benevolence do well intitle them to the public esteem,—but their characters are better described by their own writings, than by any thing I can say to recommend them, for which reason I have not attempted to make a single alteration, nor, upon comparing these letters with the originals, which were sent me along with the copy, do I find there has been any alteration made, except the changing of one word for another, shifting the scene, as I hinted in the beginning, and the leaving out whole paragraphs, which related, as Henry has expressed it in

* By the rule of *omne majus*.

the foregoing letter, to private history, or private business.

The editor of St. Evremond's works speaks as follows, in part of his preface to the third volume. " One of the objections made to this author is that odd medley of serious and comical, of grave matters and trifles, which is to be met with in his writings. Would it not have been sufficient, say certain austere and difficult persons, to have made a collection of all that is good and solid? why was not every thing left out, that is not only useless but waggish ?

" Those people who would have us apply ourselves only to useful studies, ought to consider, that our author is not a doctor, who writes to instruct and dogmatize, and that he is not a man engaged by his profession to give the public an account of his time and studies. He is a gentleman, who having much leisure, seeks how to pass away the time agreeably; who writes sometimes on one subject, sometimes on another, only for his own amusement. He is a man of wit, who proposes to divert himself as well as certain persons with whom he converses : it would most
" certainly

To the P U B L I C. xv

“ certainly be unjust to judge of him with
“ too much rigour, and the injustice would
“ be yet greater, to oblige those, who
“ publish his works, to suppress all such
“ as are purely diverting.”

So much, by way of apology, both for my authors and myself; for I think the above quotation is applicable, through the whole, to our case.

As to the chasms, I cannot barely say, *Nonnulla defunt*, but *Hiatus valde deflendi*; and when I declared my design of publishing, and applied a second time to have the chain connected, I was told by Henry, that he did not think it fair dealing with the publick; besides, he thought they appeared, at present, more genuine than a complete *suite* of letters would do; and farther said, that if the regular series had been preserved from the beginning, he would take an handful here and there at random, and throw them into the fire, lest it might be suspected that they were wrote, or preserved, with a design of publishing, as he was humble enough to think that they could have but very little merit in this view: in allusion to which, he told me a story of a certain lady, who, upon reading over a letter she had

wrote about business, to a gentleman, and thinking it too orthographical for a woman, added an (e) to the end of several words, lest it should be suspected that she had spelt by the aid of a dictionary.

This whim of his, which however may be justified from a thorough knowledge of mankind, puts me in mind of the virtuoso taste for mutilated statues, and time-eaten coins, where the parts which remain rise in value; in proportion to those which are lost; or to the Dutch device of burning half their spices, in order to enhance the price of the rest.

But I was at length of opinion with him, in not framing any letters to supply the chasms, because it would, as he observed, be disingenuous to give the public any thing in this collection, which was not original; therefore I have not, as I said before, even taken the liberty, which the authors paid me the high compliment of indulging me in, of altering any one sentence, which I thought might be better expressed; or displacing any argument which I presumed might, perhaps, be put in a stronger light; for certainly any person, of a curious taste, would rather see the original text, though
incorrect,

incorrect, than read all the *Bentleii Emendationes*.

However, I have thrown in a note, here and there, to explain the occasion upon which some of the letters were wrote, and to clear up some particular passages or allusions, which might not, perhaps, be intelligible to every reader: I have also arranged the letters according to the numbers, which are prescribed in the foregoing letter, and these are all the merits which I claim to myself, except the publication, in the course of the following collection.

As I know nothing of the lady, but from her writings, I am not enabled to give any particular account of her private history, except that she is of a gentleman's family, and had a very genteel education, but was left, very young, without a father, and without a fortune. She is—but Henry himself will better tell you what she is; and making poetical allowances for the hyperbole of his warm manner of expressing himself in her favour, I do not think he has at all exaggerated her praise: and if his writings do not sufficiently describe her worth, I could supply their deficiency to the entire satisfaction of the world, if I was at liberty to tell them.

who.

who Lady O — is, and that she received her early into her matronage and friendship, from no other tie or attachment, but the goodness of her character, and the excellency of her understanding.

Henry is a person of as good a family as any in this kingdom, whose patrimony was formerly looked upon to be very considerable; but losses and misfortunes in his family have reduced his fortunes to a very moderate competence at present.

His education was unfortunately neglected, notwithstanding the early and continued fair omens he always gave of the happy issue, which might have been expected from it: while he was very young he essayed his genius in poetry, and wrote several things, which I have been told were surprizing for one of his years and untutored mind.

He kept copies of them for several years, as he told me himself; till finding himself bereft at last, of all hope of an education, learned and polite enough to introduce him to Apollo's court, he threw them into the fire, and applied his mind to graver studies, saying, after his lively manner, That a bad shoe-maker

shoe-maker was preferable to a bad poet, for that it was better to coble for bread, than coble to starve.

Being at length left upon the world at large, he had sobriety and address enough to introduce himself, by degrees, into the genteelest and most reputable company, but grew soon weary of the *active idleness*, as he termed it, of a city life, and retired upon a visit, to a near relation in the country, where he passed several years in reading, teaching himself French, and studying husbandry philosophically: then he engaged himself in a farm and the linen manufacture, in the management of which, and reading, he has employed himself for several years past, and where we shall now take our leave of him for the present.

His acquaintance with Frances was accidental, and commenced, on his part, as an affair of gallantry; but finding no probability of success, and being enamoured with her writings, conversation, and character, became, at last, a real and honourable lover, but declined matrimony for several years, as she had no fortune, and his expectations from his father were much larger than they are likely to turn out: to which consideration
you

xx The EDITOR, &c.

you may add his other relations and friends, whose interest he had great prospects from, though it is probable he may, as he has hitherto been, be deceived in these too.

At length they married, and it would not be amiss if the reader, before he proceeded, should turn over to letter cclxxxv, where he will find the noblest and most rational arguments given for taking this step, that ever justified an action, which the world might deem imprudent; and if the design of this publication was merely to stamp a character for my friend, I need only to print that paper to his praise: but as I am certain that the public will receive a very agreeable and improving entertainment from the whole collection, I shall detain them no longer from the perusal of them, than while I subscribe myself, their unknown humble servant,

The EDITOR.

DEDICATION to the First EDITION.

To the Right Reverend

Lord Bishop of CLOGHER.

MY LORD,

YOU will doubtless be surprized at an address from a man who declares himself a stranger to you, and to whom even your person is unknown.

I acknowledge, indeed, that I have been particularly conversant in your lordship's writings, but contrary to the usual tenor of dedications, I mean not to confer honour on you, but on myself, by declaring my approbation and esteem in general, of all your works.

And yet this is not the consideration, which has induced me to place these papers under your patronage; but Henry has often, in private conversation with me, raised your lordship's character
higher

DEDICATION.

higher in my opinion, than the best writings can do, as

*“ One moral or a mæer well-natur'd deed,
“ Does all desert in sciences exceed.”*

And it is owing purely to such hints as these, that I have been prompted to borrow your name to usher a work to the world, which is remarkable, among other excellencies, for humanity, charity, and universal love.—I am with great respect,

My LORD,

Your most humble and

most obedient servant,

The EDITOR.

F R A N C E S 's
D E D I C A T I O N

To the SECONDEDITION.

To MY SEX.

WITH what awe must I appear
before so august an assembly,
at whose tribunal the greatest
potentates, with all the earthly powers
that be, are wont to kneel? You were
born to dominion; they but usurp a
throne: *Beauty is natural empire*; go-
vernment but artificial: *Beauty is royal-
ty without force*: Kings are established
by violence: Beauty is the true *right
divine*, and every other power but of
human

DEDICATION.

human institution. In a word, you reign
o'er those who rule the world besides.

It is ~~your~~ charms, virtue and decorum, which inspire mens hearts, refine their minds, and polish their manners, who, like savages, must first be rendered *slaves* before they can be reclaimed.

“ To beauty's fierce, tyrannick sway,
“ All mankind their homage pay ;
“ But soon, alas ! its power decays,
“ A strong, but short-liv'd blaze.
“ While wit and virtue still maintain
“ An uncontested, lasting reign.”

Here the galant poet attributes three of the highest perfections of human nature to you, while the generality of our *lordly rulers* allow you but the first; the second they partially challenge as their sole prerogative; and with regard
to

DEDICATION.

to the third, they often employ all their art and address to sink us to a level with themselves.

La Bruyere says, " By what laws, " edicts, or decrees are women prohibited from opening their eyes, from " reading, from retaining what they " read, or from giving an account of " it, either in their conversation, or " their writing ?" He imputes the scarcity of female productions to the narrowness of our education, or to the world's having placed your chief merit in beauty. To which I shall beg leave to add another bar, as effectual as either of these; namely the natural modesty and timidity of our sex: But as this assertion may be doubted, because it comes from a woman, who may be

b.

suf-

DEDICATION.

suspected of having marched a volunteer into print, I shall take this opportunity of vindicating myself from such an imputation, by giving here an extract from a letter I wrote, some time since to a truly worthy * lady of distinction, when the first thoughts of publishing these papers were in agitation, of which she was herself the first mover, in answer to one I had the honour of receiving from her, upon this subject.

“ M A D A M,

“ We both return you many thanks
“ for the trouble you have taken about
“ the manuscripts we sent you; but
“ Henry would by no means have them
“ published at his expence, merely for

* The late countess of C orke and rrrery.

“ fame,

DEDICATION.

“ fame, which we are too modest to
“ hope for from any of our literary
“ works; and if they were to be printed
“ without my † lord’s corrections and
“ amendments, it would be a ridiculous
“ vanity to expect even the smallest
“ portion of that precarious, popular
“ breath.

“ We neither of us wrote for any
“ other readers than ourselves, and it
“ was your favourable opinion of some
“ letters you had seen, and the incou-
“ raging hope of his lordship’s free use
“ of the *style*, that first gave Henry a
“ hint of publishing.

“ But even these flattering induce-
“ ments never thoroughly influenced

† See the editor’s preface, p. xv.

DEDICATION.

“ my consent, which amounted but to
“ obedience at last; for though I was
“ vain of his writings, I was always
“ alarmed at the apprehension of seeing
“ my own appear in print; and had
“ really some warm expostulations with
“ Henry, for submitting several of my
“ childish and unguarded letters, even
“ to your ladyship’s perusal, whom I
“ have reason to believe my friend;
“ and, from the kind opinion you have
“ sometimes expressed of me, I fear, a
“ partial one too.

“ Nay, I have always had so humble
“ an opinion of my own sense and ta-
“ lents, in this way, that I have often
“ been sensible of a jealous concern
“ whenever Henry paid me any com-
“ pliment upon this subject; because I
“ attributed it, too justly, to an over-fond
“ pre-

DEDICATION.

“ prejudice in my favour; a belief
“ framed from his wishes, which a little
“ time and further acquaintance with,
“ me might remove; and I had reason,
“ to apprehend, that he might then re-
“ flect upon me for having lost those
“ merits, which I owed solely to his
“ kindness and partiality.

“ Upon the whole, I confess that I am
“ secretly pleased at his determining
“ not to print these letters, lest the pub-
“ lick censure might point out his too
“ fond mistake, before his own biaſſed
“ criticism would suffer him to find it
“ out.

“ While we have the originals, the
“ transcripts of our hearts and minds,
“ in our possession, I think, with a sort
“ of melancholy pleasure, of the solitary
“ amusement, they may, at some time,
“ afford to the survivor;

DEDICATION.

Sad luxury ! to vulgar minds unknown :

“ which like the inurned ashes, or em-
“ balmed heart, would be a more valu-
“ able relick of a departed friend, than
“ their picture ; in which latter light I
“ should look upon our letters in print,
“ even with my lord’s improvements
“ and corrections ; for though the artiff’s
“ hand might give more lively colours,
“ higher grace and expression to the
“ features, it would not be, to the fond
“ lover, so dear a pledge as even the
“ dead essence of the deceased partner of
“ our social pleasures.

“ I am, MADAM, &c.

This is the only letter that I ever pre-
served a copy of, and I did it purely with
this view, that if these writings should,
as they have since done, obtain in print,
I might have a voucher in my possession,
to

DEDICATION.

to justify myself, to some particular friends, from obtruding my weak and artless lines upon the publick, out of any vanity, or self-sufficiency about them.

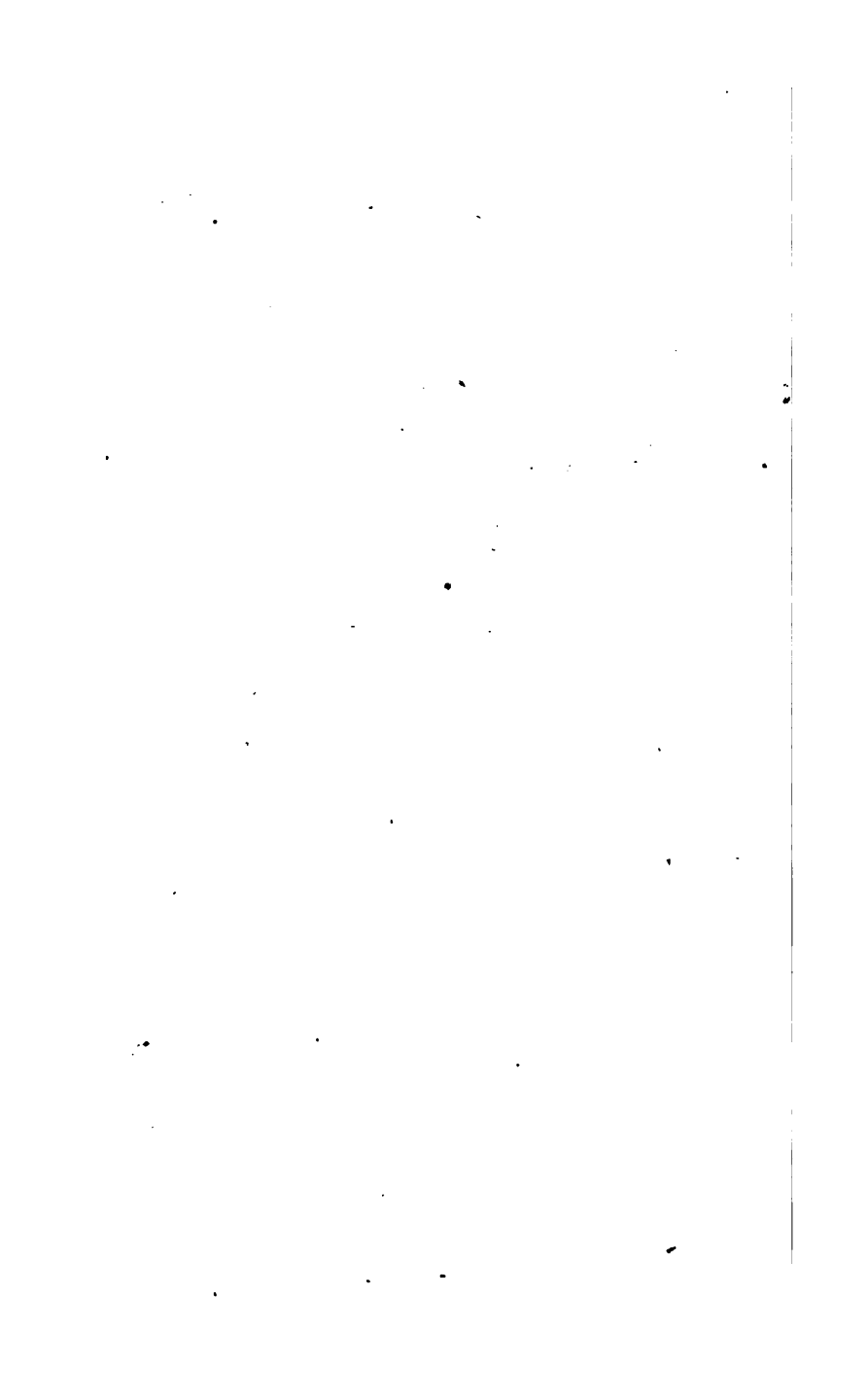
I am, ladies, with great

respect and esteem,

Your most humble, and

obedient servant,

FRANCES.



H E N R Y's
P R E F A C E.

To the SECOND EDITION.

WHEN I received the first edition from the press, I was extremely mortified at the many errors, and mistakes which I met with in it ; false printing, wrong pointing, words put in, others left out, nay intire letters forgot ; and the whole series so misplaced, that I was sometimes at a loss myself to find out the sense or connection, 'till I looked into the original manuscripts.

I received several letters from my friends, both in England and Ireland, who knew the authors, and the genuineness of the whole performance, to encourage us to publish a new edition of the writings from our own manuscripts, and under our own inspection

Of the press; to lay the scene intirely in Ireland, where the whole correspondence was held, except two or three letters; to fill up the blanks of persons and places, to supply the chasms, and amuse the curiosity of the publick, with somewhat more of the novel of our lives.

Upon this hint we have proceeded to this second edition, complying with the preliminaries, as far as we could do so with ingenuousness; correcting all former errors, presenting the true scene, restoring the names of places, filling up the blanks, adding above thirty letters that were left out of the first edition, and inserting several others which have been recovered since the publication. We have not indeed filled up the blanks of proper names, because we did not think it any way material to the generality of readers, and that some people, perhaps, may not chuse to see their names in print.

We have also supplied the chasms, by framing arguments from our memories, out of the letters that either preceded or followed
in

in the original correspondence ; this last however, is only done where the explanation, or connection was necessary to the reader : for wherever he meets with the word *Hiatus*, he will find that an answer was not material to the foregoing letter ; or that the following sufficiently explains the one it refers to.

We have also, here and there, thrown in such notes, comments, or allusions, as occurred to us upon this second reading, which would have given a pedantic stiffness to the original letters, but may help to illustrate and enliven the whole when they are submitted to the publick.

There are some passages in the former edition, that refer to the Essay on Spirit, which I have thought proper to leave out of this. Whatever a person's private opinion may be, in such high concerns as church or state, it is both a prudent and becoming respect, due to the establishment under which he lives, to keep them still private, if they shall happen to differ from the
prin-

principles of either; unless he should have the opportunities or advantages of being placed in such a rank or situation of life as either intitled or called upon him to attempt a reformation.

The late learned bishop of Clogher was properly qualified in both these respects, and I am well convinced—I have reason for what I say—That to be the head of a sect, was not any part of his ambition: His heart was good, his morals perfect, and his religion sincere: His charity extensive, his benevolence universal; and he wished happiness to all mankind, through their whole state of existence.

As to the last article of stipulation, we have really nothing worth adding to what has been already published, of consequence or variety enough to entertain the reader: For the history of our loves is the history of our lives, and the following series of letters form in truth, the whole compass of our novel.

As

As I had not the good fortune to be bred to any profession, art, or science, I have had but little intercourse with the busy world : My path has been led

“ Along the cool, sequester'd vale of life.”

and being thus at liberty and leisure to assume what employment I chose for myself, I generally spent my time in reading and reflection, in order to supply, as far as in me lay, the oft lamented deficiency of a liberal education ; the mortifying want of which I began very early to perceive, by happening, on my first entrance into the world, to be introduced, through family connections, to the charming and improving society of several very accomplished persons of both sexes, chiefly women. indeed, whose company I generally preferred, for the reasons given in the forty-first letter following. “ Nulla res
 “ magis animis honesta induit, dubiosque et
 “ in pravum inclinabiles revocat ad rectum,
 “ quam bonorum virorum conversatio,
 “ paulatim enim descendit in pectora, et
 “ vim præceptorum obtinet frequenter
 “ audiri, aspici frequenter. Occursus me-
 “ hercule

“ hercule ipse sapientum juvat; et est ali-
“ quid quod ex viro vel tacente proficias.”

Though this last thought is much in the affected strain of Seneca's writings, it has however a great deal of justness in it; for the very presence of a good man, like the gloom of temples, or the shade of groves, gives naturally a serious and virtuous turn to our thoughts and contemplations; nay, even a statue may produce some good effect, and, like the trophies of Miltiades, inspire ambition in a noble nature.

As I never had the opportunity of a good library to refer to, my studies have been a sort of miscellaneous learning, picked up here and there, *sparsa coegi*, as I could borrow books, sometimes of history, physicks, metaphysicks, divinity, morality, or mathematicks; by which means I acquired a sort of heterogeneous knowledge, a kind of *dictionary literature*, which could not answer any one useful purpose of life, and only served to puzzle and perplex my understanding with confused ideas, indigested notions, and gave me a superficial smattering of arts and sciences,

sciences, which, if I had not, very happily, a natural diffidence, and habitual reserve in my manners, might have affected me with a pertness, pedantry, and self-sufficiency, that would have rendered me equally petulant and ridiculous through the whole course of my life. The only material circumstance of my history I shall tell in a few words: I undertook an extensive manufacture, with more spirit than prudence, depending upon the publick favour, more than on my private fund. I raised three thousand pounds upon my single credit, which I expended on this scheme. I applied to parliament, received a bounty, and had encouragement given me to expect a much larger consideration the next sessions: I laid out this latter sum also, in completing the necessary works; and when every thing was finished, I mortgaged the whole buildings, apparatus, &c. with all my farms, and other securities, for money to set the machines in motion. I applied a second time to parliament, but the exigence of times, the treasury low, and the eve of a war, dictated a parsimonious

oeconomy to the publick. I was disappointed, my hopes blasted, and my fortunes ruined; my creditors grew impatient; my effects were dissipated, without exonerating me, or relieving them; I was branded with the title of Projector, "*immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat,*" my substance became the prey of knaves, and my character the jest of fools.

There are who never had genius to contrive, or spirit to attempt an adventure, who comfort themselves in their own insignificance, by commenting upon the miscarriages of others: Many of these vacant heads and heartless bosoms have since insulted my misfortunes; for such people are literally of opinion with the poet's sarcasm against the the judgments of the world:

*Crede mihi miseros, prudentia prima relinquit,
Est sensus cum re, consiliumque fugit.*

In short, after ten years of my vigour of life spent in the most active endeavours to establish my fortune by the fairest and most laud-

laudable methods—by the only means that either my education, or the assistance of my friends afforded the opportunity of exerting—I found myself, in an instant, with a wife and children in my arms, without trade, profession, patrimony, or employ; bereft of all, * Hope only remaining in the box. *Quid enim nisi vota supersunt?*

But in truth, if my life had a greater variety in it, or was composed of more entertaining events, I have not a talent for narration, I have never attempted any thing which exceeded the length of a page or two: I grow *scant of breath*; I have not a fund of literature to deal by wholesale, and am therefore obliged to retail my stock by scraps; and perhaps, if all writers would confine themselves to a more laconic method, it might save readers from misemploying a great deal of precious time; for if we were to strip many elaborate treatises of tautology, amplification, circumlocution, in short, of

* Alluding to the story of Epimethens.

every thing that is not immediately requisite to the subject or argument; whole folio's might be reduced within the compass of a primer. I suppose it was this reflection that gave rise to the Greek adage, † *Mega Biblion, Mega Kakon*: and indeed such writings may very literally be stiled *The Works*, &c. for they are often more a *manual labour* than a *liberal exercise*.

For this reason, I have always preferred familiar letters to any other manner of writing; there is a conciseness, ease, and freedom in them that indulges my indolence; they have the advantage that conversation has over study, they both polish and improve: In a word, they make up a mixture from the two greatest pleasures of life; they partake of *society* and *retirement*. There is something in the style of letters that engages

† This was the saying of Callimachus, one of the most elegant of the Greek poets. He wrote *eight* hundred different pieces, which were all comprehended in about *five* hundred pages.

the reader, even where the subject is below, or beyond his attention: Aristotle, in his treatise *De Mundo*, writes in a manner so much more free and polite than in the rest of his works, that some criticks have suspected it to be spurious; but one of his commentators observes, very justly, that the easiness and perspicuity of that tract, was owing to his having digested it into the form of a letter.

My writing, like my life, has been *extempore*, and with as little parsimony. I have sometimes crowded as many hints into one letter as would have served a French *wire-drawer* to frame a dozen essays out of. I have lived with precipitation, and all my œconomy has been for the future: I have many subjects in contemplation, but never proceeded further than minutes: I have not patience or servility to trail a thought in
lead-

leading-strings; I only write to amuse my friends, or relieve my mind from uneasy reflections,

Et sic demulceo vitam !

Farewel,

HENRY;



A SERIES OF
L E T T E R S
BETWEEN
HENRY *and* FRANCES.

L E T T E R I.
FRANCES *to* HENRY.

THOUGH I have not any thing to say, which can amuse you, yet I could not think of sending you the inclosed pamphlet under a blank cover, as a silent remembrance is worse than none.

I return'd to Abby-street the evening you left us, but found it was not the same place.

In short, as Pope says, the sensation is like that of a limb lopt off, which one is every minute unawares applying to use, but finds it is not.

The tune of Delia sounded in my ears all night; and I could have sat by, for the first time, with patience, while you play'd Alberti's twelve concerto's, to have had you back again, for the remainder of the evening.

VOL. I.

B

Now

Now let me shift the scene, and behold you galloping away, delighted with the certain prospect of giving as much joy to those friends you go to, as you have left concern with those you parted from. At this thought I begin to hate you and myself, for being one moment uneasy about a man, who perhaps hardly remembers me enough, to forget me. I am so mortified at this, that I am angry at myself for having ever thought of you, but as a common acquaintance, if indeed your merit or particular behaviour to me would have suffered me to remain in such a state of indifference. These thoughts, however, do not proceed from any slight opinion I have of your sincerity, but a mortal apprehension that neither my sense or merits can purchase your esteem, without which your love would shock me.

I am running on too far, mais il y a quelque chose dedans qui m'entraîne: So I shall conclude with some lines of *Cowley*, tho' you call him a surfeiting author.

- " Each day think on me, and each day I shall
- " For thee make hours canonical.
- " By every wind that comes this way,
- " Send me, at least, a sigh or two:
- " Such and so many I'll repay,
- " As shall themselves make winds to get to you.

I know you will laugh as you did at Tom's correspondent for tagging her letters; but consider, I want a poet's help to speak to you, though I need none to think of you.

FRANCES.

HENRY *and* FRANCES.

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LETTER II.

HENRY *to* FRANCES.

Ma Chere Mignonne,

QUELLE foule des affaires m'accable !—I thought to have wrote this letter in French, but you are too nice a critick for me. Only imagine to yourself a person, who has, every day of his life, as much business to do, as can well be compassed in twenty-four hours, to have three months affairs come upon him at once ! One, who could scarce spare time from the hurry of business in town for Love and Alberti, to be confronted with such an embarras du monde !—Without your sprightly conversation, or my twelve concerto's, to support my spirits.

Your very agreeable letter I confess to have more than repaid me for Alberti, giving me sense for sound ; but nothing you can say, or any one else can do, will make me amends for the want of your company, if you would be as kind when present, as you express yourself in absence ; but, as I have good reason to think you coquette in this matter, I swear it is most cruel treatment, to give me hopes, which you have not generosity or courage to fulfill. This is disingenuous behaviour, and very unkind too ; for I am of too sanguine a constitution to bear disappointments with indifference ; and, tho' I can fast a day upon a page in Epictetus, yet I could not live one night upon all the volumes of Plato.

HENRY.

LETTER III.

FRANCES *to* HENRY.

THE only consolation I had in the midst of my anxiety for your leaving town, was the pleasing hope of an agreeable correspondent, but I find you design to rob me of that too; for you seem inclined to misconstrue the sentiments of an *heart*, touched with the most lively esteem, for the effects of a coquette humour.

Will you not suffer me to think of you but in an hostile way?—Are you afraid I should love you too well, that you thus make it my duty to hate you? I ought indeed to endeavour it at least; to make a suitable return for the sentiments you seem to have towards me.

As to your hurry of business, I wish I could share or alleviate that, or any thing else, which makes you uneasy; but this, like most of my wishes, is fruitless. And I am poor, even in thanks, for your obliging compliment, but I dare say, that some new acquaintance will soon make you ample amends for the loss of an old one.

FRANCES.

HIATUS MAGNUS.

LETTER IV.

FRANCES *to* HENRY.

I WAS never passionately fond of the country, but you have made me hate it. You know my nature jealous, and I cannot help considering Maidenhall as a beloved rival, who monopolizes all your time; yet, like a true woman, sincerely long to see it, not to admire but to depreciate all its charms;

charms; though much I fear there will be no room for envy so to work, for I am apt to think that whatever you design and execute must be perfect.

I have a great mind, if I thought it would vex you, not to write to you this month, for your failing to answer my Tuesday's letter; but I will believe you did not receive it time enough, for I dare hope you would not fail me in a matter of business. You may see by this that my spirits are much recovered, for, when they are low, I am always humble and desponding.

You say that I never did, nor never will do any thing you recommend to me; and I am picqued into a principle of contradiction, and resolved—not to do any thing henceforward, but what you desire. In short, you vile men have strange ways with us poor women, and you want but power to be most admirable tyrants.

I must repeat what I have often told you, that I never took ill any advice you gave me; for I could not be such a child as to misinterpret the kindness of your design, tho' I might be feeble enough to resent the harshness of your discipline. I have, from my infancy, been used to a fatal delicacy: Fatal indeed to me, as it has enervated every faculty of my soul, and superadded a thousand tender weaknesses to the weakest of the weaker sex. You were yourself, my dear Harry, as the lawyers term it, "accessary after the fact," and helped to augment this foible in me, perhaps beyond a cure. The tenderness of your manners, the fondness of your expressions, and the softness of your letters joined to render my weak mind more delicate. It is true, that, from the transitory state of sublunary things, I ought to know that our passions are as variable as the moon,

"Which monthly changes in her circling orb,"

and that we should not depend on the tempers or affections of men, which can ebb and flow as frequent as the sea ;

“ But bid physicians preach our veins to temper,
“ And with an argument new set a pulse,” &c.

I acknowledge myself obliged for the friendly concern you express at my want of health.—But, for Heaven’s sake, why need you be so anxious to divest yourself of that little tenderness which remains for me ? At your time of life to set up for a *Stoick* is something extraordinary indeed, and, without assuming that insensate apathy which they pretend to, I cannot conceive what glory you can find in an affected insensibility for one, who feels the tenderest friendship and esteem for you. Adieu.

FRANCES.

P. S. I send you a paper much commended here.

LETTER V.

Dear FANNY,

THE indifference you mention is, like other matters, unfairly laid to my charge. I feel no such mortal symptom of a decay in my love ; therefore, my dear * Hygea, you have, with reverence to your divinity, mistaken my disorder. If I do not indeed write in the same gallant gay style as formerly, it is, because no man ever continued to do so, except some vain fop, to shew his wit, his *jeu d’esprit*, or *tour d’expression*. I had already said every thing, which a fond heart could dictate ; and, instead of ransacking the poets for apt expressions, which shew more of fancy than of love, I, for the rest of my life, sincerely meant, and purposed

* Goddess of Health.

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 7

to prove my attachments, by actions, not by words. Few words among friends are best, they say; then fewer still between lovers, whose whole life should be a repetition of silent minutes.

“ Where words meet words, ere from the lips
“ they part.”

My former letters, to which you allude, were proper to persuade you into a belief of my passion for you: But, when you seemed convinced of that truth, I thought it time to quit romantick flights for a more rational converse. In the mathematicks some general principles are, at first, demonstrated; and then they are taken for granted, through the remainder of the study; for, if they were to be repeated on every occasion, science would be intolerably tedious.

In short, if my professions are not as frequent as usual, or my expressions as fond, it is owing to what Shakespear says for Cordelia,

“ Her full heart
“ Reverberates no hollow sound of emptiness.”

The paper you sent me does not answer the character of it; or, perhaps, I may have thought it insipid, and inelegant, having read it just after your dear letter.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER VI.

DEAR HARRY,

THE account of your adventures diverted me extremely; for I am always pleased when you seem so. I wish you were not too wise, and too lazy to write a novel, for I fancy you could do it admirably; and it would be an easier task for

you than almost any man, for I think your whole life and character have a great deal of that style in them. I wish I had any thing equally entertaining to amuse you with, but my set of acquaintance may be properly called a Set; for there is such a sameness runs through them all, that they are hardly to be distinguished, but by their voice and features, and are liable to such a censure as somebody blundered out when he wanted to compliment a collection of portraits, "All alike, all alike!" When I am confined to such machine society, which is too often my fate, I fancy I am got into Powell's commonwealth, and am looking about for the wires to give them some variety of motion.

Oh! my dear Harry, how cruel is it in you to torture me thus, to raise my taste for higher joys, yet leave me condemned to such mean society! for, while I correspond with thee, I fancy myself somewhat like Dives in the parable, condemned to torments and conversing with Abraham.

Adieu! Adieu!

HIATUS.

LETTER VII.

Dear HARRY,

Dublin.

THOUGH you unkindly denied me the liberty of enquiring about your health last night, yet, in a matter where my happiness is so much at stake, you must excuse my disobeying your commands; by intreating you to let me know how my dear Harry does this morning. I will not be answered by the common return to impertinent How d'ye's, but insist on having, what I shall always give credit to, nay, what I esteem as an oracle. I hope you will not refuse me a line, to give me an assurance of your health,

HENRY and FRANCES.

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health, and allow me to taste of ease, which I have not done since we parted, though it is all I hope for till we meet again,

“ For, in thy absence, joy is seen no more.”

I know not what I write, my head is quite giddy with my fears for you, which have not suffered me to sleep an hour all night. You know, though I do not, the Greek name for— * self-tormentor— then save me from myself; and tell me, telling me truth, that you are well.

F.

Tuesday morning—eight o'clock. When was I up so early?

L E T T E R VIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM much recovered since last night, tho' Mrs. ———'s devil of a caustick has made my throat as sore on the outside as it was before within. I felt all night as Hercules did, after he had put on Dejanira's gift; not that she is any more to my Dejanira, than I to Hercules, who resemble him in nothing, but that I am.

“ To a distaff chained.”

This day would perhaps discourage a man in better health and senses from stirring out: But I have ordered my horses immediately, to shew the steady purpose of my life; which tho' your commands diverted me from last night, neither the severity of the weather or acute disorder shall be able to alter on any other occasion. You have here a paraphrase translation of the first ode of

* *Heautontimorumenos*; the title of one of Terence's plays.

LETTERS *between*

Anacreon, which I wrote last night after you left me, to amuse my pain :

My fiddle I would fain employ,
 To sing the chiefs who ruin'd Troy.
 To Cadmus too my fingers move,
 But my Cremona answers Love.
 I change the strings, resign my bow,
 Praise on Alcides to bestow,
 I raise them high and strike them round;
 But Love alone they still resound.
 Adieu ye heroes and ye kings,
 Of Love alone my fiddle sings.

LETTER IX.

FRANCES to HENRY.

IT has been a fortnight since I heard from you till this day, during which time my life has been so perfect a vacuum, that I do not recollect circumstances enough to know whether I existed, during that interval. I am apt to think with the *Pythagoreans*, that my spirit, grown weary of its confinement in so small a prison, had a mind to animate some nobler animal, which it was in search of for so many days; but like the gadding dove, finding no place of rest, has returned again. I cannot say, it has brought the olive-branch in its mouth; though, like Mahomer's pigeon, it has returned with a letter, more calculated for war than peace, as it seems to denounce the loss of your friendship, as well as your love; but I shall not so easily renounce the former, as my prudence inspires me to resign the latter.

You must surely have lost all sense of either, when you could think so meanly of me, as you seem to do, in your last letter. Have you forgot,

HENRY *and* FRANCES. FF

with what satisfaction I received that proof of your confidence, which you would now withdraw? You tell me, I shall hear no more of it; but let me tell you, if I do not, you shall never hear the last of it; for I have fancied more joy, in embracing that dear little adoption, than ever you received in the arms of it's mother. I have not, thanks to providence, yet reduced myself to such an abject state, as to have reason to be jealous of your amours, nor do I heed,

“ If, here or there, his glances flew,

“ Oh! free, for ever, be his eye,

“ Whose heart to me is always true.

FRANCES.

L E T T E R X.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED * two letters from you since my last, and am heartily sorry to find you still continue ill. You give me great comfort, however, by saying you have hopes from regularity and the waters: Because I am very certain, they jointly will cure you. I have often told you so, and it is some satisfaction to find you, at length, profiting, like Hudibras, of Ralpho's gifts. If I could perfectly master the tenderness I have for you, and only attend to the friendship I bear you, I should rejoice to hear you are so far ill as to require severe and speedy assistance; as I was at the taking of Bergen, and other towns belonging to the Dutch; because I was then in hopes, as I am now for you, that they would exert their utmost vigour and resolution, when destruction was coming so home to them, tho' they were shamefully careless, and lukewarm about their safety before.

* One of the letters is lost.

I am sorry to find you still continue to give an unfair turn to every thing I say, and do. In your first letter, you twist and warp my meaning in the allusion of Prior; and play Shuttlecock with my plain sense, meerly to amuse your own jeu d'esprit. In your second letter, you misunderstand me greatly, nay, seem to forget intirely the gossiping affair.— But you are sick, and I am sorry.

Adieu!

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XI.

Dear SPRIGHTLY,

I RECEIVED your ballad, and read it to a large company of wit and taste, with proper stops and emphases. It was extremely liked; and copies begged, which I refused, according to your commands. It really is the true ballad-style, and has a very pretty turn of poetry in it.

I read Cowley's translation, or rather imitation of Anacreon's first ode which you sent me, and am better pleased with my own, than I was before; for it is closer to the original, is short, and has no affected turn in it, but what is in the original.

My reasons for with-holding (not refusing as you call it) my friendship at present, are these which follow.

I forget whether it is your favourite Rochefoucault, or La Bruyere, who says, "there may be an affection between persons of different sexes, without any farther desire or thought, but as they certainly regard each other, as of different genders; this cannot be called pure love, or pure friendship, but is a mixed affection of a third sort." Now, my dear Fanny, since our friendship cannot be pure, let us stick to that passion which
may

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may be so, and is, in effect, but a warmer and more intimate friendship. Your only reason for preferring Platonics must be, that you imagine they may last longer than love; and, if we were Antediluvians, your choice might be prudent; but he, that is born of the women now-a-days, has but a short time to live; therefore it must certainly be better oeconomy to make our joys exceed, in exquisiteness, what they fall short of in duration, by which means we are before-hand with old Time, and he has less to cut us off from, when he draws his scythe. But, as they say, time strengthens friendship, and weakens love, you may, with a little patience, see your strange scheme come to pass at last; upon this assurance, that I shall always add to one, what I diminish from the other, and perhaps we may become an hopeful old couple in time.

We should do in life, as gamesters do in play, push away for what they call the great game; but, finding the run against us, we are then, and not till then, to play our cards for the after-game. Now, when we find love beginning to decline, we may shuffle a good sober friendship out of it; but love never was pieced out of a decayed friendship. So that indeed, my Dear, you seem to begin at the wrong end, and have both reason and nature against you.

I am, my dearest Sappho,
or tenth muse,
Your's, &c.

LETTER XII.

HALF angry, half pleased with my dear Harry's sprightly epistle,—I am quite divided, whether I should make any reply to it, or not; but I have still so much regard left for you, as to wish
to

to convince you that your opinion is quite erroneous. Love, which is not founded on esteem, can neither be real, or permanent; it is only the effect of a wanton caprice, and is more likely to terminate in disgust than friendship. Pure love, like pure gold, cannot subsist without an alloy, which, tho' it debases the ideal value, enhances the true one, by making them both (love and gold) more fixed, and fit for use; and I dare answer for it, that the love which does not begin in friendship will never end there. But friendship is independent, requires no mixture, no alloy; it's purity, contrary to the nature of gold, is it's strength and stability; nor is it without it's elevations and transports; the mutual contemplation of truth, and the communication of knowledge, being higher enjoyments than mortal sense is capable of, and, as Young says, upon this subject,

“ True friendship warms, it raises, it transports,
 “ Like musick, pure the joy, without alloy;
 “ Whose very rapture is tranquillity;
 “ But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
 “ Heightened indeed beyond all mortal pleasures,
 “ But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

As friendship then is independent of love, and self-sufficient in it's own nature, why may it not subsist, from it's own purity, between persons of different sexes? tho' with the advantage of more delicacy on one side, and more respect on the other, which is more likely to make friendship lasting than that freedom and equality which is generally between male friends. This Platonick love, which I am describing, is of the nature of that affection, which subsists between father and daughter, brother and sister, which consists of such a guardian benevolence on one side, and such a gratitude on the other, as makes the most charming society in the world.

Recant,

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 15

Recant, thou profane ! nor offend me again, by so much as hinting at that love, which is independent of friendship. Adieu.

FRANCES.

L E T T E R XHI.

My dear FANNY,

YOUR essay on love and friendship, I acknowledge to be somewhat too abstracted and refined for me.

“ So angels love—so let them love for me ;

“ When I’m an angel, so my love shall be.”

In the mean time, my Dear, “let us e’en talk a little like folks of this world.” *

I know the objections to my natural scheme are, that it is vulgar and brutal ; now, by calling it vulgar, they acknowledge it to be the common sense of mankind, and what all men agree in must be right. “ Vox Populi, Vox Dei,” is the adage for it.

As to the grossness of the passion, I think, that as brutes are indulged but once a year, and man, the year round, we may fairly conclude Providence to have set the mark of a rational pleasure, upon, what is miscalled, a brutal desire.

I believe it possible in nature, though not in human nature, that there may be such a refined love as you describe ; but then it must be reserved for that state, where we shall live without food, and, wrapt up in hallelujahs, resign the pleasures of sense for a song.

I have been very ill, these ten days past, but no matter for that.

* “ You talk of fires which shine, but never burn,

“ In this cold world they’ll never serve our turn.”

Mal

Mal que je suis, je retiens mes esprits;
Et badiner à jamais l'Apothème de ma vie.

Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

HENRY *to* FRANCES.

THE account you give me of Miss ———'s rivalry is very entertaining; but I return you the letter, because you seem to apprehend I should make an improper use of it.

When she said that "Beauty is vanity," her moral was certainly good; but she betrays, at the same time, that ugliness is "Vexation of spirit."

To be rendered an object of love is the gift of Nature, and very few are indowed with such a blessing; but I think Providence has put it out of the power of fewer still to make themselves esteemed. —But emulation, not jealousy, must work this happy effect.

Beauty is at best but a flowery triumph, and that person must have a very poor ambition, who does not struggle for the longest and surest Empire.
Adieu.

HENRY.

LETTER XV.

Dear FANNY,

I DID not receive your letter according to the date of it, and the delay must have happened with you, for I was at the post-office when your letter came in last night.

Your account of Miss ———'s week's route of diversions made me laugh, and I was actually out of breath, by the time I had got to Saturday night;
such

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such a passion for shews and public places is natural to young people, but there are many ridiculous persons in the world, who hurry through life, after the same rate, up to their grand climacterick; and, in short, the generality of mankind seem rather to have a stomach, than a taste for pleasure:

“ Call it diversion and the pill goes down.”

Which is entirely owing to the abrupt entrance into the world, which young people are too soon indulged in, and makes them continue children all the days of their lives; as huswives observe, that if you broach a vessel of liquor, before it has purged off its crudities, it will still drink new, though you keep it on draught never so long. I wish all the children of our kingdom, were made children of the public, as was the method of some antient states; but then without such antient statesmen my wish is as absurd, as Horace's proposing to fly from Rome, as an expedient against the corruption of the people's morals; as if the vice was rather in the stones of the street than in the manners of the citizens. He, who would reform publick politicks, must first reclaim private morals; and I agree rather with Plato, who founds his commonwealth on the basis of virtue, than with Harrington, who affirms the body-politick to be a machine.

Adieu !

LETTER XVI.

Dear FANNY,

Dublin.

I RECEIVED your voluntary epistle, and am therefore to return you double thanks; and that I do not perform such works of supererogation, is not, on the word of a christian, for want of a superlative devotion, but the meer moral want of power, perhaps the want of Grace. I am like a
bad

bad pump, into which you must pour water, before you can work it to effect: But then, alas! in return for your Pierian spring, you have, from me, but the rakings of a kennel. I am a mere ghost in wit; and cannot speak, till spoken to. My highest boast is, to be your shadow; and must wait on your substance, in order to my own appearance; and, if ever I put in the least pretence to wit, it is owing to that faculty in you, which Falstaff pretended to, of being not only witty yourself, but the cause of wit in other people.

I am extremely concerned to find you in such a gloomy habit of mind; for Heaven's sake, why do you indulge such spleen a moment, while you have the powers, from your own proper fund of good sense, and natural spirit, and capacity of entertaining yourself, of chasing away the * Fou Fiend? If I hear any more from you in this strain, I shall recall the compliment I paid you in a late letter, of a tenth Muse; and rank you among the former odd number of musty old crones, and give you the place of the worst of them all; namely, a diabolical, miserable pelt of an old maid called Melpomene.

I beg to hear from you constantly; and never wait the slowness of my motions in writing, when you may be truly assured that my heart, at least, keeps time with your's, tho' you may perhaps have more Love as well as more wit, at your finger-ends.

Your's in truth,

* Edgar in Lear.

HIATUS.

LETTER XVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I AM extremely pleased to find you in so cheerful an humour, as your last informed me of; it, at the same time, flatters my vanity, as I appear, in some sort, to be the occasion of it, and in this I triumph, that the effect has, at length, answered the constancy and sincerity of my endeavours. Never suspect my friendship, or my love, after the assurance I gave you once, that, when I grow indifferent in either, I will ingenuously confess it to you; though, how should I have courage enough to declare a thing, for which I can never have a reason?

It concerns me indeed to hear you still complain of your disorder; but I often told you, your aid was not so much from medicines, as regimen, and peace of mind. Let me have a better account of your health in your next, or don't say any thing about it, for talking of those things but makes them worse, and must be uneasy to me as well as you.

I am the same man still to you, and, I blush to say it, the same to myself too.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER XVIII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I RECEIVED your letter: I shall not say favour. What you mention to me, in relation to a lady, is part of the world's impertinence, these many years, plaguing me with one wife or other,

other, which I never thought of; and the world is very much obliged to you, for authorizing its impertinence, for I shall bear it henceforward with better temper, when I find that a person of your understanding, and good breeding, cannot avoid falling into the same provoking raillery.

If I was really such a good-for-nothing fellow, as you take me for, you have given me great encouragement, by shewing with what good temper you can bear ill usage; for surely, if I was when in town, or since I came down to the country, in any manner engaged, by contract or affections, to any woman alive, I should have merited the highest resentment, to have said, or wrote, what I said to you. Were the merits and fortune of the lady you mention, equal to my wishes, and within their power, the consideration of the friend you likewise mention would make me turn my thoughts another way, and say with Tamerlane to Monces,

“ I will not lose thee poorly for a woman.”

Thus am I obliged to your opinion, for being thought capable of two, the basest and most disingenuous acts, human nature can be guilty of; falsehood in love, and dishonesty in friendship.

While I labour under such vile suspicions, it would pay you no compliment, the subscribing myself either your lover or your friend.

HENRY.

LETTER XIX.

FRANCES to HENRY.

ROCHEFOUCAULT says, “ that nothing
“ ought to make us wonder, but that we
“ should be still able to wonder at any thing.”
But, among all the things I have ever met with, to
astonish.

astonish me, nothing has equalled your letter, I shall not say favour, any more than you. In short, the statue of Surprise, tho' done by Phidias, would but faintly represent my figure, by the time I had got to the end of your "well penned epistle."

"And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,
"Where civil speech, and soft persuasion hung!"

How could you possibly return me such an answer to a letter made up of softness, tenderness, and fears? And where, for your happiness, or advantage, I generously offered to resign that love, which you flattered me with; and which, 'till I received the rudeness of your letter, I had reason to think might have made the happiness of my life.—But we are now quit; and your generosity is equal to mine, in throwing off the masque, which might have deceived me too far; and it was extremely kind to open my eyes, before I was quite got to the brink of a precipice. You seem to understand that maxim very well, "That the violence which we use to preserve love, is worse than infidelity."

How should I imagine, that your marrying that lady was a breach of friendship? I rather thought that, whom you honoured with your friendship, you honoured with your alliance; and he would be unworthy your attachment, who did not think so. And, as for my own part, I endeavoured to represent what you said, or wrote to me, merely as the effects, or essay of a certain vague gallantry, which men of wit and spirit exercise upon every silly woman who comes in their way.

If you do not credit me in this justification, you may, at least, believe my pride, which would scorn to harbour a base or mean opinion of one, whom even that very pride esteemed.

I have thus condescended to make an apology for the letter, which has offended you; but more to vindicate

vindicate myself, than to satisfy you; and I mention the word, *condescension*, from no other idea of height, or superiority, but what the injured have over those who wrong them, by having it in their power to forgive, which, as it is a thing you may almost plead a prescriptive right to, I shall not be disappointed, if I receive no thanks for.

FRANCES.

LETTER XX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

See, how amazement on me sits! O Praxiteles!

WHY, my little pet, and a spoiled pet thou art; what reason in the world had you to resent my letter, except as children do being whipt, when they do mischief?

I must have been extremely unworthy your least regard, if I had not resented being thought a trifler, at least; which indeed was the smallest part of your charge against me; and I must have thought you unworthy mine, if I had not been highly piqued at being thought so by you.

You still carry on your unkindness, by charging me with rudeness in my letter; which I remember not, at least I am very sure, I had no sentiment of ill-breeding in my mind about you; but if the roughness of my manners has offended you, I ask your pardon.

Then you tell me I have thrown off the masque, &c. &c. In short, I make such a poultry figure, thro' the course of your anecdotes, that I should be ashamed to re-offer you my love and friendship, if my inclination did not get the better of my modesty; to assure you, that they are both at your service,

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 23

service, whenever you think them worth your acceptance.

HENRY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XXI.

My dearest HARRY,

I RECEIVED your fond and elegant letter, I mean of the 29th date; for those characteristics could hardly distinguish which of your letters I allude to.

I am pleased to find, I am, at length, brought to such a steady temper of mind, as to be able to bear, without emotion, those giddy heights, to which your praise used to raise me; so that your approbation now rather makes me emulous than vain. However, I owe this strength, not to my own sense, but to your constancy; as use prevents our being affected with elevated situations.

Whatever sense, accomplishment, or merit, I have, were inspired from your precept, example, and instruction; and, like Pygmalion, you are become enamoured of the works of your own hands. How doubly kind is it in a master, first to make his pupil perfect in his art, and then commend him for his excellence in it! Farewel, my guide and safeguard too, through all the dangerous paths of life.

L E T T E R XXII.

My dear FANNY,

Naas.

WE might have got farther to-night, but I chose to stop here, for two reasons; the first was my impatience to write to you; and the next, that I was heartily tired of my companion, who

who was too well mounted, to escape from on the road,—but I have locked myself up here.

He is one of those matter-of-fact men, who, being incapable of striking out any thing, or idea, from their own sense, or imaginations, are eternally talking of what they have seen or heard; as if they were reading over a memorandum book; and whose whole conversation is, a diary of their lives; for which reason, they are never tired of talking, because they are themselves the chief subject-matter of their discourse. I asked him, a little peevishly, this evening, whether he had ever committed murder, that he could not bear his own thoughts for a moment?

Perhaps I should have borne him, with more patience, at any other time; but, having so lately parted from your charming converse, I became more nice about my company, and less capable of any entertainment, except this of writing to you; while the happy wretch is prating below stairs, to the waiter.

I have not time now to send you the rules, or maxims, you promised to conduct yourself by, with regard to your life and health; but, if you consult your own reason and understanding, I flatter myself, you will have the essence of them all, before I can reduce them into a dull form.

Adio Cara.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XXIII.

Dear HARRY,

I HAVE no news to write, but what I believe is none at present, that I am very angry with you. Now, do but observe, spectators, what an innocent countenance he puts on, such gentleness of

of manners, and demureness of features, that it would require proofs, equal to mathematical demonstration, to convict him; and yet I know this plausible man to be worse than a devil; because he has art enough to hide his cloven foot. But, alas! rage is the shortest passion of a woman's soul; and I find (to quote a passage from one of your letters) that " * absence to lovers, like death to enemies, * buries every fault, and enlivens every virtue." However, I am glad you are in the country, that I may have the pleasure to think of you, in the most amiable light; though it is possible I lye; for, perhaps, I have done nothing else, but wish you back, ever since you went. Yet it is a vain task to think of rivalling your Naiads, Dryades, and Hamadryads, so, in allusion to your † song, I must " make a " virtue of necessity," and be content.

I am quite ashamed of this vile-penned scrawl, not of quality; but I hope you will excuse it, when I tell you, that this pen was made by Noah, and plucked from the wing of that ungrateful Raven, which flew from the Ark, and returned not again; and has been worn to the stump by old maids, in making anecdotes of tea-table talk ever since.

Adieu.

* That letter is lost.

† The following song, wrote extempore by Henry, many years ago, upon a particular occasion.

Dulce est desipere in loco.

HOR.

A L L hail the first of April! to folly sacred day,

And may we all enjoy it, for ever and for aye,
And a fooling we will go, we'll go, we'll go,
And a fooling let us go.

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C

There's

from an inn, where I was dull and idle ; so deferred it, 'till I came here ; where I have a world of business, and the highest entertainment, that a number of agreeable women can give to a man of my constitution. And, to raise the compliment higher, (*"car il est bon de se fair valoir"*) I assure you, I have a struggle with myself, at present, about writing to you at all, lest my letters should fall into awkward hands, during Tom's illness ; but my inclinations, with regard to you, have always been too strong for my prudence ; so on I venture, with a "*Hoping these few lines,*" &c.

I cannot forgive your making Noah's messenger a Raven, a bird of ill omen ; when you might have made so many pretty allusions to the Dove, emblem of love and peace. I beg henceforward your quills may be gently drawn from the pinion of the fond cooing turtle, and that the harsh croaking of that boding fowl may never once assault my ears.

Here I might bring in a subject-matter applicable ; but shall postpone it 'till I am sure there are none but friends-by. The same reason shall prevent me from giving my thoughts upon the business you mentioned to me at parting, till I hear Tom is able to walk abroad ; so shall conclude, at present, with an extempore tag :

Vive la joye, et l'amour,
Et Diab'le emporte les Cafeurs !

Adieu.

HENRY.

LETTER XXV.

MY dear Harry's letter, at last, relieved me from ten thousand anxieties, while you were on your journey, which are better felt than expressed. If you knew what pain your negligence gives me, I am sure you would be a little more punctual

in your correspondence ; but I almost despair of ever making you sensible of the delicacy of my sentiments, and am sorry to find that you are still unknowing in my heart. However, I accept your apologies, for “with ease, alas ! we credit those we “ love.” But I beg henceforward, that you would not be guilty of voluntary faults and omissions, merely to shew, with what address you can excuse them.

I do not at all doubt your being perfectly happy, in the company of agreeable women ; and more so than other men can boast, in being approved by them. But, “ why am I told how Pyrrhus loves “ or hates ? ” unless it be to mortify my vanity, or hint that my letters may be an impertinent interruption to your pleasures at Elton. Yet I am encouraged to write more particularly at this time, because, perhaps, you may more readily come into my Platonick scheme ; and that we may, without loss of time, enter upon that charming system, I beg that, by return of the post, you will send me a full and true history of your giddy wandering heart, from the time it last trembled at a rod, to it's present fluttering at Miss Rawley's feet, whom I know to be one of your company, and probably the fairest ; but I shall pursue this subject no farther, for I find myself beginning to grow grave, which is the next step to growing dull.

I am offended at your seeming to doubt my knowledge in Sacred History ; so shall refer you to the 7th verse of the 8th chapter of Genesis, where you will find, that the first living creature, which fallied out of the Ark, was that very identical Raven, mentioned in my last letter. I disclaim all commerce with the Dove, because it returned with an olive-branch, and I here declare war with your whole worthless sex ; be you alone excepted from

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my general resentment. I wish you that soft repose, which has been, this week past, a stranger to
Your own

FANNY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Dear FANNY,

TAKE notice that this letter is dated the 26th of April, 1747, Old Stile, that you may see how punctual I am, in answering your's. For, by your saying I was a week silent, I suppose Tom forgot my letter in his pocket, and I was really just sitting down to enquire what was become of you, when I received your's. I assure you, I never suffer a post to intervene between our correspondence, and I will date my letters henceforward to convince you of it.

I am sorry you are ill—I am not much better myself; and am reduced to such a degree of low spirits, as I should be ashamed to own, but that I never disguise my foibles to you. I hope that it is owing merely to my disorder, that your letter appears very unreasonable and unkind; but that and other matters be referred to our meeting, which shall be as soon as I am able to ride up to town; and, though you stint me the pleasure of your company to half an hour. I shall find nothing new in that, for I never thought I had that happiness longer in my life.

I thank you for the trouble you have had about my things, and have here sent you a bill for the costs: I have not seen them yet, but am resolved to like them, except the green you have chosen be a willow, which from your letter, I have reason to apprehend.

I may hear from you once at least, before I shall be able to set out, and hope to have a better account of your health, to know when you have fixed for your journey, and whither you are going. Adieu.

I am your's, in sickness or in health.

LETTER XXVII.

My dear HARRY,

I AM extremely sorry to hear that you are ill, either in body or mind; and I sincerely wish, that my present sympathy could alleviate your pains; for I could with pleasure say,

“ Ah! more than share them—give me all thy griefs ”

I took the air three or four times in a vile hack; and this has encumbered me with two new disorders, a cold and tooth-ach. I have quite lost my appetite; and oh! how long are the nights, and how short my slumbers? I am quite feeble, and my spirits so low that I can hardly speak, to give necessary directions about myself; and you know what a helpless family I am in. Oh! haste thee quickly to my aid, and bring Hygea with thee, more welcome, as alone enjoyed in thy loved presence, and admired converse—at least, oh! send me a ray of her divinity in your next letter, by telling me that you are recovered.

You call my last letter unreasonable and unkind, and say you are preparing the willow. If to esteem you with unwearied constancy, and to preserve the strongest friendship for you, even tho' you do not merit it, can be called unkind (though I acknowledge it to be unreasonable) I shall then own your charge is just. Yet, notwithstanding all this weakness in my easy nature, I am determined not to see you,

you, but for the time I proposed; and I hope to have courage enough to keep a resolution, upon which, perhaps, the happiness of my life depends.

My head is so bad, that I am hardly able to hold it down any longer, tho' I have a thousand things to say; but, if I am able, I will write again by next post.

I beg you will let me know, when you intend to be in town; for I have a question to ask you, which is of some consequence to my repose.

"And oh! what anxious minutes count they o'er,
"Who doat, yet doubt; suspect, yet fondly love."

Do not ask me what it is, for I will not tell you till we meet.

Farewel, Farewel.

FRANCES.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM very sorry for the account you give of yourself, and is it not, at the same time, an extraordinary thing, that I should wish it were all true? for I would rather you had real, than imaginary ills; as one is much easier cured, than the other; and I have often had reason to suspect you of spleen and vapours before now.

I am quite recovered, and design going to Dublin in ten days; but think it needless to carry Hygea with me: "Nec Deus interfit, &c." for you possess her already, and bear her about as * Jupiter did of old, for Hygea is but one of the names of Minerva.

* Minerva was born of Jupiter's brain.

As soon as I get to town, I shall wait upon you, to talk over your extraordinary and cruel scheme of banishing me from your presence for ever ; and, as to the question you mean to ask me, I will lay open my heart and mind as freely to you in any particular you have a curiosity to inquire into, as I would to heaven, “ from whom no secrets are “ hidden ;” for, indeed, I know nothing, merely relative to myself, which I need, or would chuse to conceal from you ; and, for what concerns other people, you can have no reason to be anxious.

I am, my dearest, best-loved girl,

Your constant and

Best-loving Lover.

LETTER XXIX.

I AM extremely pleased to find that my dear Harry has neither forgot his promise, nor his Fanny. You see my pulse keeps equal time with your's : I wish I could say, they made as healthful musick. However, you may be assured, your letter has been the most efficacious medicine I could possibly have met with.—As the mind has often an effect upon the body to its detriment, which you hint to be my case ; it is but fair it should also have the same towards its good ; and as there has been a sympathy between us, in sickness, it would be a provoking circumstance, if it did not continue in health.

Forgive me if I am laconick to-night, for I write in a room, where there are as many different tongues, as the apostles were inspired with ; tho' I think the allusion would have been juster, if I had mentioned the building of Babel.

I thank you for your refined compliment, which, tho' I have not vanity enough to give credit to, I
am

am however pleased at; as I am with any thing which gives you an opportunity of shewing that lively wit, which is elegant even in trifles; and perhaps that passage in your letter was designed as a supplement to the * *Moriae Encomium* of Erasmus.

A Well-bred young man threatens to read my letter; so I will close it, to save you from the scandal of having so stupid a correspondent.

* In praise of Folly.

LETTER XXX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I HAVE been abroad about business, these two days, tho' not very well able to go; and am just returned to Maidenhall, which I call coming to myself again; and the first thing which occurs to me, of course, must be the applying myself to you.

Your letter was, as you say, laconick; but I should have thought so, if it contained a quire of paper. However, I kissed your last billet, as it was; in some sort, an emblem of yourself, short & sweet.

I sincerely wish there was such a sympathy between us, as you hint at, of mutual affections and passions; but all the effect, I feel, is like what is perceivable in iron, touched by the loadstone; I am sensible of an attraction; but alas! my needle points still to the North, which is the region of your chastity.

I will make my letter as short as yours, to shew you, I can keep to a pattern; tho' I have not been able to put as good stuff in the suit. Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER XXXI.

Dear HARRY,

BECAUSE a surprize is an agreeable novelty in this same *repetitious* world, I would not give you the least hint of our intended frolick. Kitty and I set out on Tuesday morning for this place; which we reached much fatigued that night, partly by stage, and partly horses, which her brother brought to meet us at Mullingar, which town was all in flames, as we passed through it, but our virtue carried us safe through the fire Ordeal.

Direct for me at Mullingar, for we shall be all next week at the assizes, which are expected to be very gay. I have often thought this a very odd time for diversion; and that a jury shall now pass a verdict of death, and then go dance. There is also a sort of cruelty in it to the miserable wretches, who suffer death or banishment at such times; for the weight of all ills is increased by comparing ourselves with those, who seem to rejoice in health or happiness.

We shall return to Dublin in ten days.

Adieu!

H I A T U S.

LETTER XXXII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

IHAVE delayed answering your letter till the post is just going out, that I might have as little time to spare for that purpose as possible, lest I should answer it too fully and circumstantially; therefore shall only say, that, if you will recollect yourself, you will find, that, since the first of

HENRY and FRANCES.

our acquaintance, there has not been an act of dishonour, unkindness, or even the lowest baseness to be imagined; which you have not, at several times, charged me with; my love, my friendship, my honour, my word, my oath, all suspected: and the highest and often repeated testimonies of them all discredited.

“Are these things so?” and are you surprized, I should warmly expostulate about them? which was, in truth, all I did in that letter, that has moved you to such intemperate resentment.

When I press you home, about some particulars in your former letters, you pretend to be in jest:—Is this ingenuous dealing?—when I invite a large set of company to pass the summer at Maidenhall, merely to save appearances in your coming, you tell me you understand this, but as a pique of honour. But indeed, Fanny, if I had not more true love for you, than I find I have credit for, the caprice and unreasonableness of your behaviour, in several instances of our lives, would have left me no necessity for preserving such a pique.

I shall say no more 'till we meet; nor then, I hope, one word upon this subject; for I believe half an hour's reflection, upon the substance of this letter, will prevent all occasion of such altercation for the future.

I am, my dearest Fanny, notwithstanding
the mortifications I have met with,

Your's indeed,

HENRY.

LETTER XXXIII.
FRANCES to HENRY.

"What is the reason that you use me thus ?

"But 'tis no matter—

"Let Hercules himself do what he may,

"The Cat will mew, and Dog will have his day."

SHAKESPEARE.

IT is a provoking thing, that I have not any person to whom I dare appeal, upon a difference, or dispute between us. Yet it would avail me nothing, if I had; for that provoking, insincere, plausible, philosophick temper of yours, would prejudice any judge in your favour. In short, the reasonableness of my anger cannot always appear; but the calmness of your resentment may; for, while I am raging like one bit by a mad dog, you are looking as demure and wise as a physician feeling a pulse. Thus superficial observers are imposed upon; but the searcher of hearts would find me all the time overflowing with tenderness and good-nature, your's rendered callous by deliberate malice and calm rancour.

I know you will be angry at this; but so you have *pleased* to be with, almost, every second letter I ever wrote to you, and every second or third conversation has been a quarrel.

I find we are both very apt scholars at a game they call Snap-Dragon; but it shall not be my fault, if we do not leave off before we have burnt our fingers; therefore, for the sake of peace and friendship, let our correspondence end here. Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER XXXIV.

HENRY to FRANCES.

YOU began your last with a quotation which aptly describes the life we have led for some time past; but that I think our's is more unaccountable; for, tho' a dog and cat begin with squabbling, yet use soon reconciles them to each other; and I have seen them, in a short time, quietly occupy each a chimney-corner, as becomes domestic animals to do. While, on the contrary, we met, at first, with that mutual love and good liking, which might promise a long and constant harmony; yet were not one month acquainted, before, *puss*, in her majesty, had her back up, and *curr* fell a snarling; as if use, habit, or custom, whose constant strife is against nature, made a sport of reconciling antipathies, and destroying sympathies.

But, to quit this allegory, I 'beg, my dear, you will consider, I never reprimanded you for any thing, but what I thought some injury to your fortune, character, or health; mostly the last; for the first is too small for oeconomy, and the second too good for scandal. But you are constantly complaining of bad health, and yet always doing the very things which destroy it; you are eternally taking medicines, and, at the same time, doing irregular things, to prevent their operation. Now it is probable that there are but few drugs in an apothecary's shop, which may be said, if they do no good, to do no harm; so that you may find the best medicines, without a regimen, turn to poison; and, though frequent parties to Chapel-Izod may be extremely agreeable to the rules of novel,----they are, I assure you, quite contrary to the laws of physick. Such irregularities, or excess of any kind, may not probably, so soon as you imagine, answer the

the end you have sometimes so wickedly wished for, the end of life ; but may, perhaps, take that shocking turn, I mentioned to you lately, from an hint of your physicians, who said you sometimes spoke like a person who was going mad, and, with regard to your health, you acted like one that was so.

If, from all these apprehensions, I should endeavour to exert, perhaps, a little too roughly, the power and influence I thought I had over you, and which I never will make use of, but for your own advantage, I was in hopes of having the reason and nature of the thing calmly and dispassionately considered, and expected your thanks (tho' I acted not on so poor a motive) rather than your resentment.

But I have done, and do here promise you, that I will never give you any farther offence this way ; for I find you will have no regard to your health, for your own sake ; and am afraid you have not kindness enough to take care of it, for mine ; so I shall, at least, keep the sentiments of my heart to myself, however I may be made uneasy with the affections of it. Adieu !

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER XXXV.

My dear FANNY,

I DID not mean to trouble you about such a trifle, at a time you were ill, and only desired Tom to ask where you had bought the silk, that he might match the colour. Let me know what the charge is, that I may not owe you paltry debts, already so bound and mortgaged to you.

I am

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 39

I am extremely sorry, any thing in my letter should provoke you, or make you uneasy ; though I need not make any apology for being guilty of an error, any body, who knows you, might be led into, the believing you never say or do any thing, without a meaning, or design. What I hinted at, were passages out of your own letter ; and though, upon my honour, I did not take them seriously, I thought, at least, you meant to make me uneasy by them ; and, not having the malice to disappoint the design, I thought it would be some amusement to my little Snap-Dragon, to find her scheme was answered.

You have a right, I think, and a power, I swear, to make me uneasy, whenever you please ; and I shall henceforward never repine at your prerogative, but when you extend it, as you often do, to the cruel height of rendering yourself unhappy in health or spirits ; which is a method of wounding me, beyond the power of temper or philosophy.

I am, my dearest Fanny, because I would not help it, if I could,

Your's eternally,

HENRY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Aug. 12th.

WHEN my dear Harry left town, I flattered myself, that I should enjoy "a cool suspension from pleasure and from pain," and that I should recover my shattered spirits and broken constitution, firmly resolved to live soberly, quietly, and righteously, all the days of my life. But see, the strange perverseness of my stars, more in fault than

than I, which drive me on the rock I thought to shun; for I have not been one evening at home, since I saw you; but have been continually immersed in noise, folly, and hurry; dragged about in melancholy parties of pleasure, where, as Pope says,

“ I sit, with sad civility; I hear,

“ With honest anguish, and an aching ear.”

And surely it is a vice, which the devil was not fool enough to possess us with, to sacrifice one's life and health, without some joy in doing it. I wish you had died three years ago, for, if I had not known you, the now insupportable stupidity of half the world would not have been so irksome to me; for nothing is good or bad, but by comparison. You will oblige me extremely, if you will send me a dissertation upon fools; why there should be such difference between men of the same family, and same education, as may frequently be observed; and, at the same time, explain to me the cause, for reason there can be none, why women are generally so fond of them. You must know that a lady, whom you sometimes have heard me make whimsical mention of, has, in one of her flights, taken a most unfortunate passion for me; and, as love is importunate, she has not let me rest an hour in peace, since that unlucky æra; though what I suffer from her is not the worst part of the adventure; for the oddness of her character is not unentertaining; but she is generally surrounded by a group of miserable young men “ of wit and humour “ about town,” who, by the way of being sprightly, talk nonsense by the hour, then, by way of galantry, cram us into hacks, and away to Chapplezod, where I have supped with the same set, twice this week; and,

“ Woe is me!

“ To have seen what I have seen; seeing what I see!”

But, now I think of it, why did you not write last post? I confess, indeed, that your sprightly letter had more fine things in it, than I shall be able to pay you back in a thousand years; but, to some the Gods have given fortitude, &c. and, since writing is not my talent, I think you would be more unreasonable than the Egyptian task-masters, if you expected a return from me; but, to play back the pertness of your own expression in one of your letters*, “You may be assured that my heart, at least, keeps equal time with your’s; tho’ you may have more wit, as well as love, at your fingers ends.” And tho’ I cannot pay you off in your own coin, you may see, by the length of this letter, that I make you the only tender I have in my power; and, like a compounding creditor, you must accept of quantity for quality.

We have dreadful weather here; long, tedious, wet, winter days, and short nights, which hardly give us time to warm ourselves in our bed, before the ghost of Phoebus returns, to haunt us with another uncomfortable day. The streets are not much above ankle deep; which is an entertaining circumstance to those who have no equipages. In short, I am almost ruined with the expence of chair-hire.

I wish you could prevail on yourself to write oftener than once a week: for, if I am reduced, I vow, I will print your letters—I think they will keep me in tea, clean linen, and plays; which, you know, is all my food, my apparel, or my amusement.

Adieu! and think often of

Your affectionate Pauper,

* Last paragraph of Letter XVI.

LETTER XXXVII.

My dear PAUPER,

I RECEIVED your pretty lively letter, and am now set down to consider of the question you started in natural philosophy, relating to fools.

As Nature is said, to have made nothing in vain, what apology then for fools? This difficulty, which has so long puzzled the learned, I will offer you two solutions to answer; one by denying, and the other by admitting the fact.

First then, I deny that Nature ever made a fool, but as she makes any other monster; not by design, but through some accidental imperfection in the organs of conception, or casual event, happening afterwards to the infant in the cradle.

Next, I admit fools to have been made by design, and, no offence to you, shall take the liberty to offer to you this hypothesis of the matter.

Providence made man; and, seeing it not good, that man should be alone, made woman; then, seeing it not good that woman should be alone, he made a fool; before which time, it is said, she amused herself with the Devil. From which time knaves and fools have divided the favours of the fair.

Let me now attempt a metaphysical account of this extraordinary matter, which has so much surprized natural philosophers: That two men, who have had the same education, and, upon dissection, have been found anatomically the same, have yet so greatly differed in their understanding. For this, see the Metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, according to Virgil's account of it. He says, in the sixth Æneid, that the souls of those who die, return to this world again, to animate other human bodies;

bodies ; except such as, having completely acquitted themselves on earth, remain in Elysium for ever.

Now, since as many, or more, are born, as die ; therefore it is necessary to create a number of new souls, to supply the place of those, who have finished their course. Thus I conclude, that what is stiled sense, or parts, in men, is but a recollection of former experience ; and their having no consciousness of this matter, need be no objection to the truth of it ; for men have often, in their sleep, exercised the arts they have been bred to, without any recollection of their former practice. The fools then of this world, I take to be some of those *new-fashioned souls*, occasionally created, who must necessarily pass thro' an infancy of threescore years, and be re-born to every stage of human life, before they can arrive at an adult understanding, and find rest for their souls in Elysium.

The second part of your proposition must be deferred, to be considered the next post.

I am, my fair querist,

Your faithful respondent,

HARRY.

LETTER XXXVIII.

I N answer to the second part of your quere, I shall observe to you, that fools are generally said to be

* * * * *

As I have not my books by me, I must leave this section imperfect, and proceed to another natural reason ; which is, that thought and reflection much waste the strength, and dissipate the animal spirits ; which weakness, fools being especially free from —, here again I am at a loss —, so I shall quit

quit this subject, after having made one reflection; that, as women are said, in general, to be extremely fond of fools, it is surprising, that men of sense find so little favour from them, as they are allowed to be incomparably the greatest fools in love. For a man of sense must beat a fool, all to nothing, even in folly. But this remarkable distinction, with women, must be owing to their extraordinary piety; paying greater regard to ideots delivered from the hands of their Creator, than the fools of their own making.

Enough of this idle subject.——Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER XXXIX.

FRANCES to HENRY.

DOST thou expect to live, after all this prophane sarcasm against women? Or do you hope that Hesiod or Orpheus were to be the last sacrifices to female justice? Observe that I enter the lists, and draw my pen, as champion, for the honour of my injured sex, in which I shall proceed after your own method: First, by denying, and then by admitting the fact.

First, then, I affirm that souls are not of different genders: Therefore, in the metaphysical nature of the question, your sex has, originally, no advantage over our's. I have, indeed, sometimes heard such an arbitrary distinction made, as virtues masculine, and virtues feminine; but the ancients, who first classed all human properties, were of a different way of thinking, and tacitly confessed, that all virtuous qualities belonged more properly to our sex; for I have heard you say a very flattering thing, that, "in all the learned languages, the moral excellencies were nouns of the feminine gender."

“gender.” If you answer for Greek and Latin, I will do the same for French and Italian *.

This shews, at least, the general sense of lettered philosophers, as also of great and warlike nations, in our favour; and what led them naturally into this way of thinking, was, the observing that all refinement in sense, and all improvement in manners, was entirely owing to our influence over your uncouth natures, who afterwards polished those virtues, which we first inspired,——“ye had been brutes without us.”

But, not to insist on any superiority in this matter, would it not be cruel and prophane to suppose that the Creator should require as great virtues from us, and subject us to as severe trials as men, without inspiring our minds with equal strength, or making our souls capable of as high moral perfection?

Your own reading can furnish you with instances in women, of every manly virtue, even of personal courage, and contempt of death; sufficient to prove the force of my reasoning; which, however, I shall not enumerate, lest, my memory failing me, you should perty say, these examples were but just sufficient to establish the contrary rule, by their exceptions to it. In answer to which, I shall make the reply, that † a lion did once to a man, “you keep the art of painting in your own hands.” But, grant that the instances of female heroism are but few; are not the opportunities of exerting it

* It was some Dutch witty grammarian who, in his chapter of genders, said, that the masculine was more worthy than the feminine.

† The fable tells us, that a man and a lion had once a dispute, about the superiority of their natures; upon which, the man produced the picture of a lion, conceived by a man; and the lion made the answer alluded to above.

as few also? I mean with regard to actions publick, and shining enough, for the notice of history; which, however, are neither more amiable, or more difficult, than many virtues, you, vile men, give us the occasion of exercising in private life; to which you have arbitrarily confined the sphere of our activity.

Now even those few extraordinary examples, which you all admit of, sufficiently prove, or declare, the original excellence of our natures; for reason, or philosophy, may perfect virtue, but cannot create it; though a narrow and illiberal education may so depress and obscure great qualities, as to give that paltry tenour to our character, which you so unfairly reproach us with;—which brings me to the second part of my proposition, and which, according to your example, I shall make the subject of a second letter;—so a truce, till next post, but no peace, till you are fairly conquered.

Farewel,

F.

LETTER XL.

IN antient times, when mankind began to frame themselves into societies and states, the male part, perceiving they were born with greater bodily strength than the female, vainly concluded, they were originally indued with greater sense, and nobler souls; so, partially arrogated to themselves the superiority, at the same time that they refused, very unfairly, the same law of reason, to an horse, though they acknowledge him to be an animal of greater strength than they.

Now, in order to preserve this unjust dominion to themselves, and their heirs male for ever, they concluded no Salique law so effectual, as to fetter
and

and inflave our minds, by such a narrow, domestic, and partial education, as should bury the seeds of sense and philosophy, and byas our opinions towards a notion of their superior, "manly sense and reason." *

Thus un-educated, and unimproved; or, what is worse, condemned to a wrong education; it is as unfair to censure us for the weakness of our understandings, as it would be to blame the Chinese women for little feet; for neither is owing to the imperfection of nature, but to the constraint of custom.

When women then associate themselves with men of moderate understandings (for I think you too humble, when you brand those with the title of fools, who fall short of your own sense) it is only because it is natural and reasonable to prefer that degree of sense, which they comprehend, to that which is beyond their apprehension, and this is nothing more than you would do yourself; for I do not know what pleasure you could have in company with a Rabbi, merely for his understanding Hebrew, of which you hardly know the type.

I believe that women, *ceteris paribus*, as Tom says, always prefer men of the best sense, as far as the limits of their own understanding extend; beyond which, it would be enthusiasm, not rational affection, to carry their regards. I confess, indeed, that there must be an intire equality between the rivals, with regard to fortune, titles, dress, person, &c.—before the superiority of understanding can have the chance of being considered. But then this is owing to the false byas of female education, which directs us to wrong means of happiness; and, instead of being censured for our error, we ought to be pitied for not being rendered capable of judging right.

* Maria in the Nonjuror.

Henceforward

Henceforward therefore, I interdict you, *wife* fools, from the unjustness of any satyr against our sex, till you have, by a proper and more liberal education, given our noble and ingenuous natures fair play to exert themselves. Do this, if ye dare, ye imperious tyrants, and ye shall see, how small we will make you. Oh ! let us once be free ; for know, that arts and sciences cannot raise their heads under despotick sway.

I shall mention but one thing more, which appears to me a very natural thought, that Providence certainly intended women, rather than men, for the study and contemplation of philosophy and scientific knowledge ; as the delicacy of our frame seems fitter for speculation, than action ; and our home-province affords us greater leisure than men, who, from their robust and active natures, seem calculated more for business, labour, and mechanic arts. Out then, ye vile usurpers of our natural rights and liberties ; and oh ! for an army of Amazons to vindicate our wrongs.

FRANCES.

N. B. St. Evremond says, “ that a woman is a more perfect creature than a man, supposing each to have attained to their highest degree ; for he thought it more possible to find the stronger reason of man in a woman than the charms and endearments of a woman in a man.”

There is this reason to support his sentiment, that masculine sense is an excellence in women, but feminine manners ridiculous in men.

F.

LETTER XLI.

HENRY to FRANCES.

"Penthesilea furens, mediſq; in millibus ardet—

"Bellatrix: audetq; viris concurrere Virgo."

VIRG.

There is more Latin for Tom.

I AM charmed at the ſenſe and ſpirit of your letters, and find it eaſy to recant from an error, which was never ſeriouſly my opinion; and you may forgive the ſpleen of a * provoked lover, who, as is generally the way, abuſes the whole ſex, to ſhew his reſentment to one. But I cannot help obſerving, how generously, and like a knight-errant, you have behaved, to fly to the ſuccour of a weak combatant, by whoſe fall you could no way be affected.

"Since ſatirizing thoſe, is praizing you."

To this you could not be induced, by any ſtate policy, to enter into an alliance for your own defence; but, like the Engliſh, bravely ingage in the war, to preſerve the balance of power; and, like them too, furniſh the whole expence yourſelf.

For my part I declare, that, in general, I both like and eſteem women better than men, they often excite the exerciſe of the moſt pleaſing virtues, generoſity, honour, and compaſſion, they inſpire us with the whole *petites Mœrals*, as the French not unaptly term them, of complacency, politeneſs, and gentleneſs of manners: without which, as you ſay, we had been brutes indeed.

I never feel myſelf intirely chearful, but in their company; for ſprightlineſs and good humour more

* Alluding to a former amour.

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particularly

particularly become you, than us, as your gayer and more poetical reading, with almost an entire vacation from business, enable you better to exert them: In short, what was said of musick, may very justly be applied to your sex:

- “ *Women*, the cordial of a troubled breast,
- “ The softest remedy, that grief can find:
- “ The gentle spell, which lulls our cares to rest,
- “ And calms the ruffling passions of the mind.”

Your sense too is of a prettier and purer kind, than ours; un-incumbered with logical distinctions, and untainted with the subtleties of the schools, “ you strike each point, &c.” *

Your virtues also are more constant and perfect, as they flow from a natural delicacy of sentiment, a chaste education, and a more implicit sense of religion; while our morals, being first obscured by a libertine youth, are to be brought to light by the labour of thought and reflection; then pass thro’ the hands of legislators, who so mix and blend them with human policies, that the very spirit is evaporated; or else they are so subtilized by the refinements of the philosophers, that the intire substance of virtue is destroyed.

I shall say no more now, on this subject, but that, as I formerly hated the whole sex, on account of one woman, I shall henceforward love them all for the sake of another; in consequence of which, I here throw this palinode at your feet.

HENRY.

* There is a text in Proverbs, which, by admitting a turn upon one expression, gives the preference, very justly, to female erudition, “ The wise in heart shall be called prudent, but *the sweetness of the lips* increaseth learning.”

.H.

P. S.

P. S. I cannot resist a piece of pertness, in answer to the last paragraph of your last letter ; by observing, that, whether knowledge was originally designed for woman, or no, I cannot tell ; but she certainly was the first who *tasted* of it.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XLII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

ROCHEFAUCAULT, or some other maxim-monger, has these words: " It is a common thing, with some people, to exclaim against inconstancy, at the same time that they are pleased to have an example of change ; for sometimes the warmest love and strictest friendship insensibly slacken, and we then seek a quarrel, merely to have some pretence to set ourselves at liberty."

This, my dear Fanny, seems really to be your case ; for, I'll be sworn, there is not the least colour, in any of my letters, for such a charge against me. I have not found fault (because I would not wrong you) with any of your words, or actions : I have not taken it into my head, that you seem tired of the commerce between us, either in conversation or correspondence ; nor have I ever sought a pretence to put an end to it : So far from it, that though you have so fairly (say unfairly) put one in my way, by your last extraordinary epistle, I will not take the advantage of it ; though it has a recommendation, which could make me do almost any thing else, namely, your request.

You desire too, that I would return you all your letters, for indeed I have them all ; but this too I must refuse you, for I should part even with your writings with more reluctance, than it seems you

would have, in resigning mine, and their author too, to help out the bargain ; which I do not think an equivalent for the exchange you require, and I am too poor in wit, to part with any thing for less than its full value ; though, perhaps, it would be but slightly prized, if known how little I gave for it.

Though I will not part with any thing of your's, you see how readily I give you what belongs either to myself or others : I send you inclosed a lock of my hair, which you desired, when I saw you last ; and, to pay the highest compliment to female vanity and triumph, I also send you a locket to put it in, which was given me by a very pretty woman, whose hair I have taken out, and burned this day in the midst of some of her letters, which I had by me. Adieu !

HENRY.

LETTER XLIII.

I RECEIVED my dear Harry's letter, and am much better pleased to acquit, than condemn you ; for, as somebody says, I think it is Pope, " To say I have changed my opinion, is no more " than to say, I am wiser to-day, than I was yesterday." I am doubly pleased to have my knowledge increased by a consciousness of your regard ; but, in return for the maxim you quoted, give me leave to use one of the same author's, where he says, " That the violence done us by others is often less " painful than that we do ourselves." Now, my dear Harry, if this be the case, I am still unhappy in your correspondence : For, be assured, that my sole motive for desiring to put an end to it, was, that I imagined it grew tiresome to you : and it would mortify me extremely, if I thought I owed more to your good-breeding, than your good-will. This opinion of mine, however, did not proceed
from

from any suspicion of your constancy, but from a consciousness, that I had neither a natural, or acquired fund, sufficient to return your charming and frequent letters, with that sense and spirit they required; and, if ever I neglected a post, it was from that awe, which has often made me silent in your company. But, if you have indeed condescension enough to read the dictates of my little artless heart, with a more than partial eye; if they sometimes give you pleasure, even of good natured criticism, and that you still regard me with friendly optics, I wish no higher satisfaction than the continuance of your entertaining and improving correspondence.

It humbles me sometimes, when I suspect that you only write to me, as Moliere used to read his works to his house-keeper, that he might be sure there was natural wit, in whatever was relished by her untutored taste. However, your condescension has, any way, its esteem with me; and puts me in mind of a beautiful simile, I have somewhere met, quoted from the antients, "that a man of merit resembles an ear of corn, which stoops the more it is loaded with grain."

I thank you for the lock of your hair, but am angry at what you call a compliment to female vanity. I assure you I do not feel any joy on this short lived triumph, but rather look upon it as a *memento*

"Of that hard fate, which she must one day prove,
"Who hopes, from Henry's vows, eternal love."

Besides, I should have set it in a more elegant manner, for your former mistress seems to have had but an old-fashioned taste; but I will now keep it, as it is, for its own intrinsic value.

I should be tempted to send you a locket, to replace the one you have parted with; but if beauty could

could not keep its situation near your heart, I fear you would not let any thing, which belonged to me, have any place about you ; nor even give it so honourable a funeral, as that of the antient Romans. I wish, however, I could prevail with you to deal with my letters as, you say, you have done with her's ; for I can't be easy, while you have so many proofs of my folly in your keeping. Adieu !

FRANCES.

Pray send me some more of your poetry.

LETTER XLIV.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I AM very well pleased to find you are at length recovered to a right way of thinking : I swear you wronged me much, if you really imagined, I could any way be tired of a correspondence with you, if you was kind enough to bless me with one, in every sense ; nor can I believe you had even the least suspicion about it ; but had a mind to make a farther essay of my fondness for you, like people, who rise to go away, in order to be pressed to stay. These are, my dear Fanny, idle, romantic experiments, and I beg you will never make use of them again, as they suit not with my sincerity and plainness.

As to the sacrifice I made you, it was neither out of inconstancy, or ingratitude ; but she has been married some years, and lives very happily ; so I burned her letters, and destroyed her bracelet ; because I did not care to keep any thing of her's, which might, at any time, give cause of unjust suspicion, or give me occasion to recollect any thing about

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 55

about her. By which means I thought to acquit myself with honour, both to her and you.

The inclosed I wrote the other day upon my friend's illness; which I should not think worth sending you, if I had not received your commands, last post, to this effect.

Adieu! my pett—write often, and oftener.

HENRY.

When first Amyntor caught disease,
My sympathizing heart
Could taste no joy, till he had ease,
But felt an equal smart.

Far greater were my griefs than theirs,
Who wretched exiles live:
Sincerer were my silent tears
Than hopeless lovers give.

A home, or mistress, all may find;
And only fools despair;
A wise man's love is unconfin'd,
His home is ev'ry-where.

But one sincere and faithful friend;
Is the best gift of Heaven;
And all his wishes there should end,
To whom that bliss is given.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R XLV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THERE is something very provoking in your last letter, which I have observed in several others, upon like occasions; and, in short, there is, in your whole behaviour towards me, something which of-

ten distresses me to the highest degree. You first say, or do some rude, slighting, or unkind thing to me; and when I resent it, by speech or letter, you throw yourself into your provoking calmness, and are master of so much politeness, address, and power of countenance, that you almost persuade me it was impossible for you to offend: Which is somewhat like the archness of an academick, who, when he has burned your fingers, will give you logick, to prove there is no heat in fire; which, tho' it amuses, does not prevent your smarting; and, when I think to relieve myself by complaining to others, they do not believe me, against such gentleness of manners and specious shew.

In the history of Reynard the Fox, there is a story told: That, once upon a time, all the beasts of the field rose in arms against our hero, on account of some rogueries charged upon him; which, they thought, brought a disgrace on their brutishness. But, when they came to his den, they found him reading his Credo, and concluded the information to be malicious. When Nero was seen playing on his harp, who could have thought it was he who had just fired the city?

In short, my dear Harry, I wish you would resolve to be either an angel, or a devil, (for you can be either) and preserve constancy in your option; because this suspense, you hold me in, is the most uneasy state in the world, as I cannot determine on any certain scheme of loving or hating you: So I shall conclude, at present, with a tag from one of Martial's epigrams:

“There is no living with you, or without you.”

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER XLVI.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THERE is no news in this town, but what, to be sure, you have heard before, that ——— is gone off with ———. I pity her extremely, for, as she is very pretty, and very young, she has probably a long and shocking scene to go thro'. Had she erred with any other man, she might have had the common excuse of being deceived; of a dependance upon his honour, &c. But she abandons herself to the vilest infamy,

“ Who swells the triumph of known perjury.”

If a woman should be tempted to forfeit her own character, she ought at least to take care that the man has some character to lose, so as, tho' she becomes a private victim, she shall not be made a public sacrifice. If I was to do an act, which I could not justify to the world, I would, at least, take care to have something to excuse me to myself. But poor Miss ——— has nothing of all this to palliate her indiscretion; for she has, as Young, movingly expresses it,

“ Set out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,

“ And puts her trust in miracles for safety.”

I feel a mortified pride and indignation upon all occasions like this; as I suppose you men do, when you hear the story of a coward; lest it should bring a reflection upon human nature in general, for custom, though not ethicks, or religion, has put courage in your sex, and chastity in ours; upon the same footing. How inequitable a law that is, may be proved from this one consideration: That you have but seldom any occasion of exerting your imaginary point of honour; while poor weak women

may have, every day, an enemy to combat, either within, or without; and sometimes, hard fate! may be attacked by both at once.

Some French writer says, "*Qu'elle est à plaindre, qui à en même temps, l'amour, et la vertu!*" but I say more justly, *Qu'elle est à plaindre, qui à que l'amour seulement!*

I am ashamed at having ceded so much in this argument, but there is no disguising our sentiments to you natural philosophers; and, to those who are acquainted with the frame of human nature, I think it prudent to own the truth, lest our actions might be deemed as dissingenuous, as our words; which puts me in mind of a very just remark of your's, upon a certain occasion: "That none but cowards ever denied their being liable to fear." And it was a noble saying of Turenne to one of his generals, who took notice of an extraordinary emotion he observed in him, the morning just before a desperate engagement: "This coward-body trembles, at what the brave soul dares this day."

I shall take care to forward the letters you inclosed to me last post; and think they are wrote with that sense and virtue, which is so familiar to you, as to appear in your most ordinary actions. I am fond of your good wishes for their happiness, as you justly limit it to their merits; had you given them one grain more, I should have been extremely angry, as it would have been impiously presuming to be more merciful than God himself. However, not to make too severe a law against myself, I hope you will not deal so, *debtor* and *creditor* like, with

Your very sincere and affectionate

FANNY.

LETTER XLVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Monday morning, 5 o'clock.

I AM just returned from performing my usual *Ambarvalia in the morning; and have roused all my labourers to work, except those who are ill; whom I have visited, and assisted both with advice and money. Sometimes, when I take these rounds, I mend a fence, drive cattle out of their gardens, and do many such little benevolent offices; which are extremely pleasing in the exercise, and flatter my mind too, as if I was a sort of guardian angel, assisting unseen, and watching over those that slept.

When I am, as it were alone, awake among the brute creation, I feel myself, like Adam, sole lord of this globe; and this reflection cautions me, from his example, "to take heed lest I fall." In short, I have often looked upon early hours to be as necessary to virtue, as they are to health; for I believe most men are wicked, rather for want of reflection, than want of principle; and the charming leisure, which rising early affords for contemplation, I take to be a great help towards the improvement both of morals and religion. How natural is true devotion, when the mind is at liberty to reflect, with gratitude and admiration, upon the bounties and beauties of Providence! and I am very sure that the seducer has infinitely more power over a man immersed in the world, than over one who has secluded himself from it; insomuch, that I never knew a very contemplative man, a wicked

* A certain annual festival, among the Romans, when they perambulated the bounds of their farms, and sacrificed to Ceres.

one, since I have been capable to observe upon the manners of mankind. It is in such retirement, that the conscience has fair play to exert itself; and that a man has leisure, as it were, to cōn over his lessons of philosophy, morality and religion, before he is called upon to repeat them, when the school of the *world* is met; by which means, he must be more perfect in his part, as he will have an opportunity of getting it by heart, before he has occasion to put it in practice.

- “ Oh! lost to virtue! lost to manly thought!
- “ Lost to the noble fallies of the soul,
- “ Who think it solitude to be alone!
- “ Communion sweet! Communion large, and high!
- “ Our reason, guardian-angel, and our God!
- “ Then nearest these, when others more remote;
- “ And all, ere long, shall be remote, but these.

Young's Night Thoughts.

HIATUS.

LETTER XLVIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

YOUR thoughts upon the nature and passion of resentment, are philosophical and ingenious, and wrote with that sensible calmness, which I always admire in you; tho' I am sometimes provoked at it. In short, I have often thought it was your peculiar happiness to have been blessed, by Providence, with a judgment to direct you right, and an heart to pursue its dictates; for you really do not seem to be born with a spirit sufficient to actuate your virtue without it.

But,

But, in answer to your last letter, I think; I may observe this, that you seem rather to argue against the passion of anger, than the principle of revenge. That we are to submit to the vicissitudes of fortune, with chearfulness and resignation, as they are presumed to be the dispensations of Providence, who knows both what we are able, and what it may be for our advantage to bear, is a point we are both agreed in; but, whether we are to look upon those misfortunes, which proceed from the ingratitude, perverseness, envy, hatred, or malice of mankind, as the chastisement of Providence, so as to consider our enemies as evil agents, directed to good purposes, as divines tell us is sometimes the case, is a doctrine, which does not appear quite so plausible to my understanding. Why may we not suppose, that human frailty, or the instigation of the Devil, sometimes prompts men to enmity with their fellow-creatures; tempting them to communicate some portion of that misery to others, which the evil spirit of mischief torments their own hearts with? In this case then, I look upon revenge to be not only natural, but moral too; for the disappointment of malice, or the retorting of it with vengeance, is a more likely method of curing the vicious habit, than non-resistance and forgiveness, which but nourish the distemper.

Your sentiment; "That we should behave well to our friends out of love, and to our enemies out of picque," is certainly very noble; but give me leave to observe, that this is but a partial virtue, as it regards entirely our own advantage, but tends not to the reformation of another's manners. This may have an effect, perhaps, upon some ingenious natures, but about such our late letters have not been conversant; and, in truth, they are so few,

few, that this can only be considered as a particular, not a general rule*.

I may be wrong in my opinion, but Nature never errs, and, as the brute creation is inspired with such a passion, we may stile it the second principle, as self-preservation is the first; and I dare say, that Seneca, dying in the bath, would have smiled, in his last moments, to have seen Nero pale and breathless at his feet. Perhaps too, it was some idea of revenge on Cæsar, that prompted Cato to put himself to death (otherwise he acted very unaccountably) to disappoint the conqueror's triumph; and to draw off the acclamations of the world, in secret murmurs at their hero's fate. However, to compound this dispute upon revenge, I will agree with you, that, as a passion, it is a vice, provided you will admit, that as a principle, it may be a virtue.

Adieu!

E.

* Charles the 5th made a good distinction upon this subject; he said that "Clemency, like the sun's heat, melted wax, but hardened clay."

HIATUS.

LETTER XLIX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

THANKS to your enquiry, I am much better in health and spirits, than I was yesterday; which I attribute chiefly to your visit. If you really have any thing to say, as you hint in your letter, are you like a sprite, not able to deliver it, 'till you are first spoken to? I wish you would only give me the clue, that I may be able to trace your labyrinth:
For

For I am not ingenious enough to unriddle your meaning without it. In short, my dear, you have so speculated away your senses, that one must have the intuitive science of an angel, to converse with you, by the intelligence of souls.

As for the antithesis of your regards for me, it is no other ways to be accounted for, but by supposing, that you have either imposed on me, or yourself. If you ever loved me, you do so still: I need not add, that you have more reason for it now, if reason has any thing to do in such affairs. If you never loved me, you are only grown indifferent to me; and, being ashamed to own it, as that is a state, which lovers never come to, you pretend to hate me.

Pray who are those friends you hint at, who have merited more from you than I? None, indeed, though child of fantasy and caprice, except, by greater merits, you mean greater personal worth; and, in this particular, I must confess myself the meanest of your admirers, tho' the sincerest of your friends. You have certainly a very whimsical manner of playing with my passion for you; and after the kindness and condescension of your visit yesterday, I confess myself surprized at the unaccountableness of your letter this morning. I shall do myself the pleasure of waiting on you this evening; and, if I have the happiness of meeting you alone, and at leisure enough, I design to have some conversation with you farther upon this subject.

Adieu, ma Bizarre!

HENRY.

LETTER L.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I AM extremely obliged to you for your sprightly poem; there is an uncommon fancy in it which pleases me; and it is something of this stile in your character which attaches me so remarkably to you; for, were you but like the best of other men, you might find me often yawning in your face, as I do at them. The only variety I find, in the circle of my acquaintance, is in the cornet, who is grown so lively of late, that, as Bayes says, he has “elevated and surprized me;” and, as a man of gaiety, without a mistress, is, in the opinion of the town, no man at all, he has bethought himself of throwing his devoirs at my feet; and, taking advantage of your absence, proceeds with so much unwonted gallantry, that your poor Iphigenia may be in danger of being smitten by her Cymon; or, like Pygmalion, become enamoured of a statue of her own enlivening.

Perhaps you are very little concerned about all this danger; and, lest you should lead the way in the high road of inconstancy, I think it would be prudent to take Prior’s advice:

“Change thou the first, nor wait thy lover’s flight.”

Besides, it is a good maxim, that they who are first cured, are best cured; which, I hope, is pretty much my case, thanks to some part of your late behaviour; which has been the most efficacious medicine, and, perhaps, the only one, which could possibly advance my recovery;—so far I am your much obliged debtor.

I wrote to you last Tuesday; but was then so much in the elegiack strain, that, I fear, it was a dismal

HENRY and FRANCES. 65

mal penned piece. I am not much in a gayer mood at present, than at that time; but why should I complain, where I can hope for no redress, but merely to have my griefs insulted by philosophick lectures?

“Indifference, clad in wisdom’s guise,
“All fortitude of mind supplies.”

It is easy for us to bear what we do not feel; and they are best capable to give advice, who are not *concerned*. However, I cannot help acknowledging the generosity of your behaviour upon such occasions; for surely it is kind to take even so much trouble in matters, where you seem to have no sort of *interest*.

Adieu! my dear Stoick.

Your’s,
FANNY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R L I.

I AM extremely sorry for the disorder you complain of, as I know your frame delicate, and your constitution tender; your present state of health is indeed a proper apology for your lowness of spirits; but, at the same time, a strong reason for your exerting them to the utmost.

As for the gentleman who, you say, has attempted in some particularities, as the phrase is, to take me off; I beg you in return, will present him with my thoughts, upon his pantomime art, in the following essay.

If fools are not the only mimicks,--they certainly are the best in the world; for having no characters of their own, they can, with more ease, adopt another’s,

other's; like the Cameleon, which has no colour itself, and is reported to catch the hue of any object near it.

To shew the trivialness of this art, children are observed to be the most natural mimicks; and a girl in leading-strings will shew you how mama, and how dada, dances or takes snuff.

Even in mimic life, where one should expect this practice to be in most esteem, among stage-players, the mimic is held among the lowest class; for, in the same proportion as the representing the excellencies of human nature is the noblest part, so is ridiculing its foibles the meanest.

A buffoon, who values himself upon this *imperfection*, has the same pride with a baboon, who itself the most ridiculous animal in the creation, is, notwithstanding, the highest *caracatura* upon the human species.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER XXII.

MY dear Harry may see, by the quickness of my dispatch, the pleasure I take in obeying his commands; for, tho' I have not any thing to say, yet I should think it a breach of them to omit a post. But, not to take more merit upon me, than I deserve, I will honestly own that self-love dictates most of my letters, and I undergo the fatigue of writing many a tedious page, in order to purchase a few lines from you, "Point de rose, sans pique;" and am as well pleased, with the exchange, as the French and Spaniards have reason to be with their traffick to the Indies, where they purchase gold and jewels, by toys and baubles.

I was

I was a great deal worse, when I wrote last, than I owned at that time; for I apprehended an inflammation on my lungs, which, I was in hopes, would have proved mortal:

“ For I am weary of this earthly clay,
“ Want higher joys, and long to wing away.”

My reason for not telling you, was, because I was unwilling to anticipate your pleasure on the occasion; besides, when people are surprized, they generally make a simile; and, tho’ I could not be sensible of what you might have said, I have too much regard to posterity, to prevent their profiting by your wit. I am still as ill as a violent cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and lowness of spirits can make me; and yet I am mightily afraid, I shall recover; so I suffer to no end, but to make me despise life still more, if possible.

I assure you this is not raillery, for I was so serious, as to make my will; and left you every thing in life which I thought valuable; I chiefly mean, your own letters, for, alas! I have little else, that is worthy of your acceptance.

Farewel, my dearest Harry, living or dying.

I am eternally your’s,

F.

LETTER LIII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I RECEIVED two letters from you, last post, of different dates; and find you are returning again to the Melpomene strain, and are as great a riddle as ever. You trifle with yourself very idly; for sure, if life is not worth your care, health is. I felt your disorder, before I heard of it; for I have

have been in the same way myself, for some time past. I am sorry to find the sympathy of our bodies so great—at this distance—but, I find, the sphere of your activity is very extensive; nay, more powerful than any of the fixed stars; because you can influence, as far as you are capable of being contemplated. But no more of your malign aspects; and I beg that all your future letters may be wrote in a chearful strain, tho' it should be even a *stain* to you;—forgive the quibble—for, be assured, that nothing keeps off either natural or moral evils, so well as chearfulness; somebody calls it, “the health of virtue.” And I will venture to carry it so far as to pronounce, that a man who is not chearful, is either a knave, or a fool. Take notice, that all distempers sooner seize on us, when we are low spirited; and all ill luck, and misfortunes, afflict the coward mind, more than the brave. Chearfulness I take to be the best hymn we can offer up to our Creator, as it shews gratitude and acquiescence; while melancholy betrays repining, and despair at the ways and dispensations of Providence. It is a degree of the greatest crime man can be guilty of, suicide, and the greatest degree of it too; for deliberation is the highest aggravation of a crime.

One of the strongest articles of guilt also, instanced in the crime I mention, is, the depriving the society of a member; by how much more then the victim's merit is, by so much greater must the destroyer's sin be.——Think of this and tremble.

HENRY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R L I V.

Dear HARRY,

I HOPE you have, before this, received my congratulatory epistle, on the day that gave you birth; and, I think, I ought to condole with you now, for having entered into the old-fashioned scheme of house-keeping. I thank you for your obliging wish, but am angry with you for suspecting that I should be tired of the place, for I could say, with Cowley,

“ With thee, for ever, I in woods could rest,
 “ Where never human foot the ground has prest :
 “ Thou, from all shades, the darkness can’st exclude,
 “ And from a desert banish solitude.”

So much by way of answer to the civil part of your letter ; but, I confess, I am quite at a loss to know what return to make to the remainder of it. I have so often spoke my sentiments to you upon such occasions, that I have scarce any thing left to say, but repetitions ; which I am not fond of, upon so ungrateful a subject.

If I knew any method to convince you I am serious, and resolved in what I say, I would, upon my honour, attempt it with the greatest pleasure; tho’ it were parting with a limb; as it would thenceforward save you a great deal of needless trouble, and me from a world of anxiety and mortification. This might, perhaps, give such a turn to your regards for me, as I could wish ; or prevent your ever thinking of me at all ; even which I should prefer to thinking of me as you do. I should then be at liberty to love you, without hating myself ; because I should then have an esteem for you,
 which

which might justify my passion. I shall only add, that if you have a mind to convince me you desire either to see, or hear from me again, you will never mention so unkind, so ungenerous, and so unmanner'd a subject more; for I shall never answer another letter of your's wrote in such a style; which if you sometimes use to shew your wit, you have no excuse for, as your fund does not require the aid of libertinism.

That I do love you, I own, and confess it more freely, since I find I have, thank God, sufficient strength to acknowledge it with safety; for, I am glad to find, I do not love you better than myself; and, tho' I would cheerfully sacrifice all that is perishable of me, for your happiness, I shall take care to preserve that part of me, which may make you, at some time of your life, not ashamed of having loved me. In short, if you bear any affinity to that Omnipotence which accepts a contrite heart, you cannot meet a more sincere devotee; but, if you are like one of those heathen deities, which required a human sacrifice, I declare, I have no offering for your altar.

FRANCES.

LETTER LV.

Dear HARRY,

THOU' you have ventured upon that same subject again, yet you have done it with so much address, that I need not hold my resolution of not answering your letter. The sudden change in your morals, I confess, surprizes me; but too prompt converts, they say, are seldom sincere; and it must be a goose indeed, that is not aware when a fox preaches.

Now, I think, even your former letter more tolerable than this ; for there you declared open war, here you would circumvent ; and it would humour my pride, rather to be over-powered, than to be over-reached. What you propose, would do well enough for a woman, who only waited for an excuse : But, in my opinion, this would only mend the matter, like hypocrisy added to vice ; or, at best, a sort of don't know, as it were, neither this, nor that, nor one, nor t'other, nor good, nor bad ; but hanging, like Erasmus's paradise, between Heaven and Hell ; without vice enough to repent of, or virtue sufficient to boast.—Away, away—I'll ha'none on't, I'll ha' none on't.—

I am not so unreasonable as to take it ill, that you do not offer what, I know, is not, at present, within your power and prudence ; but, I have really great reason to resent, that you should attempt to offer me any thing short of it.

You rally me, very unfairly, upon what you call my *Platonicks* : For, I never pretended to carry affectation to such a ridiculous length ; so that I only declare myself a *Platonick* in virtue, not in romance.

Your scheme is, perhaps, a very plausible one for the world, if I should have occasion

* “ To tell them by and by, how the rogue served me.”

But, notwithstanding, there is wanting to me a certain self-conviction, without which, all your sense and logick serve only to puzzle the will, not to determine it.

You have, without doubt, a very extraordinary art, which I never perceived in any other person, and which it is impossible for me to describe with-

* The tag of an old song.

out a paradox; it is a faculty of convincing the reason, without satisfying the mind. I know, before-hand, your ready answer to this, that it shews people's prejudices stronger than their reason: But be it so, for me,—when prejudices are on the safe side, it is a virtue to listen to them; and I have just now luckily recollected an admirable sentiment, I heard you once quote, from some antient ethicks, “That we should never venture upon any action, “where we have the least doubt about its being “honest, or dishonest; for this very doubt declares, “at least, our own innate consciousness about it, “which is higher, and prior to logic and casuistry*.” This, and such other good things, has my dear Harry often said, read, and wrote to me; for, when you are not on your guard, I have often *detected* you to be a man of honour and virtue; and, whenever you appear otherwise, I am convinced that it is more the vice of the times, than of the man; which was the apology made for the puns of Shakespeare.—Indeed, I tremble often, to think how my dear Harry may be “beaten with many stripes.”

I have burned your last, and former letter, upon this subject; lest they should ever happen to appear, to the disadvantage of your character, or to the prejudice of mine.

I would have preserved the wit of them, if I had been chymist enough to separate the gold from the dross; but they perished together in the flames, the natural consequence of keeping bad company.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

* *Quod dubitas, ne feceris*, is the old adage for it.

Henry.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R LVI.

I HOPE my dear Harry will excuse my selfishness, when I honestly confess, that I am better pleased his negligence should be owing to almost any cause, than this forgetfulness of me. Do not infer from this, that I am unconcerned at your illness; for, indeed, I have felt it severely, and doubt has added a thousand fears, which I hope will never exist, but in my tortured fancy; and, surely, your neglect of writing could not be worse timed; for, I really wanted something to support my spirits, in the scene of sorrow I have gone thro', since we parted. Were I to repeat the circumstances, which have happened, I dare say, your good nature and generosity would be shocked, therefore I shall be silent;—let it suffice to tell you, I have suffered dearly for my indiscretion, and, “as to mention is to suffer pain,” I shall continue this subject no farther. If you are curious, Tom can give you all the particulars, who has behaved, with great good nature, in the affair; and I would not have mentioned it at all to you, if I did not suspect that he would do it himself, tho’ I had his promise he would not.

My aunt is still ignorant of your having been in town: but, I fear, will not long be so, as there wants only this, to compleat the affair. But this and all other ills vanish, when I compare them to the loss of your life, which I had reason so lately to apprehend; or to the loss of your love, which I live in constant apprehension of. You desire me to write often, to amuse you; but my letters are a slight return for the pleasure of yours; tho’ Sappho says,

“The less my sense, the more my love appears.”

VOL. I.

E

Which,

Which, by the way, is no great compliment to that passion; at least, this is not such a passion as you are capable of inspiring. However, I have often doubted of your tenderness, from the opinion I have of your understanding, and have sometimes asked myself,

“ From whence do all his soft expressions come?

“ Sure not from love, for that, they say, is dumb.

“ But such a passion may I never prove!

“ Give me a speaking and a writing love;

“ One that can with just eloquence persuade,

“ And justify the fondness of a maid.

Adieu!

P. S. Upon recollection, I beg that, if Tom has not mentioned the affair to you, you will not write to him about it, and you shall hear it all from me, when we meet. I have a reason for this, which did not occur to me, when I gave you leave to ask him.

I sent off the things, you desired me to buy, by the stage; I hope you got them safe, and approved my choice and bargains.

LETTER LVII,

My dear FANNY,

LAST post I received yours, in answer to mine, from Carlow, and I assuré you, the hints you gave me of some uneasiness you suffer at present, lay me under the same circumstances; and more so, because I cannot guess, what it is which affects you; Tom not having mentioned a single word of it to me, as you apprehended; and has so far proved himself a better confidant to you, than a friend to me. Now, I must insist upon it, that you will give me a full account of this matter in
your

your next letter, and not keep me any longer in suspense; on that condition, and no other, I will not inquire about it from Tom; nor shall I ever mention a circumstance relating to it, to any person living, if there be any thing in the story which requires being kept secret. As to my state of health, which you are so kind to be anxious about, I am, I think, growing better every day, tho' but slowly; I am however pronounced by the physicians to be out of danger, and am resolved never to fall again, except at your feet. I have discharged my doctors, and Time shall be the only physician I will make use of, for the future, to perfect my cure; for as he comes generally unsent for, I may spare my fees, of which I happen to have less, at present, than even of health: Time has this in common with most physicians, that, tho' he fails to cure his patients, he can give them an opiate, which quiets them, till the day of judgment; and how it may fare with us then, time only can shew.

The things you bought for me, are not come to hand yet, which happens to be very inconvenient to me. Your neglect of sending them by Mr. Wheeler, was the occasion of this mishap; and "the moral of the tale I sing," that ill luck must attend every thing you do contrary to my advice; which brings me back to my first subject, and may give you a sufficient hint, not to delay informing me fully of what you allude to in your former letter; which that you may the sooner apply yourself to the discharge of, I shall trespass no longer on your leisure, but conclude, what I shall never otherwise conclude, except with life,
Your sincere and affectionate lover, and your friend.

P. S. Pray send me twelve yards of white callico, by the next stage, for a friend in my neighbourhood.

LETTER LVIII.

Dear HARRY,

LAST post brought me the pleasing account of your recovery; surely some Sylph, whose charge I am, contrived that it should then arrive, even in the blackest hour of my life, when my spirits were sunk to such an ebb, together with my own uneasiness, and fears for you, that nought within this sublunary sphere, but thou alone, couldst raise them.

Now, give me leave to tell you, that nothing, but the joy I feel at your returning health, could make me bear the remainder of your letter with patience; if your physicians had not pronounced you out of danger, I should have done it, from your writing in so peevish a manner; for you say of yourself, and I have once or twice remarked it, that, when you are ill, you feel more tenderness, humanity, and good-nature about you, than at any other time; which is contrary to the general observation, that persons in sickness, pain, or age, even at those seasons when they most stand in need of the comforts of society, and the assistance of friends, do then more particularly, and absurdly too, contrive to deprive themselves of both, by ill-humour and perverseness of temper. Perhaps, providence has wisely implanted this weakness in human nature, to take off somewhat of the concern, we should otherwise be too sensible of, for the sickness or death of our friends, or parents; which is something like the good-natured expedient, I heard made use of by a gentleman, who frequently retired to the country to see his father, during his vacation of business at Dublin, and had a little brother there, who was so extremely fond
of

of him, as to cry for a week after his departure; being informed thereof, he ever after contrived to pick some quarrel with the boy, the morning he was to go away; this succeeded so well, that the little fellow used to call for his horses, and cry, "Well, I am glad you are not to stay here another day." But, indeed, I generally observe, you scold me when you find me melancholy; at least, I perceive it more then; as if I was a cross child, to be chid into good humour. If the messenger neglected to deliver your things, I cannot help it; and, as I thought mine the quicker method of conveyance, I am no farther answerable for the delay: I shall not answer your inquiry about the matter I hinted at, for, if I had thought proper to write it, I should have done so at first, without waiting for your peremptory commands; and I must be, for once, as absolute as you, in desiring that you will not mention it to Tom. Let it suffice to tell you, that the storm is now blown over, and that prince Volscius was the person who raised it; you shall know more when we meet, if you rest content with this for the present.

You did not tell me whether you would have the callicoe, yard, or yard and half wide; so I shall not buy it, 'till you are more explicit, lest you should *please* to be angry at another innocent blunder of mine.

Adieu!

LETTER LIX.

Dear FANNY,

YOU rejoice me extremely, by saying the affair of prince Volscius is blown over: and I approve myself for my own forecast, as, I own, I suspected

suspected something relative to him, in the matter. — I perceive by part of your letter, and by recollection of several others, that you are very fond of an amusement the French call *faire la Guerre*; and often imagine unkindness in me, for the pride of forgiving it: and indeed, without some such contrivance as this, that noble faculty in you could never have an opportunity of exerting itself, from any occasion offered by me. I only meant to rally you about the disappointment of my things, which I have since received safe, and well approved of: and wanted to tempt you to let me know the affair you hinted at, which you have not told me; but I am easy, because you say you are so. I shall not call on Tom for any farther explanation, nor press you on that head more, till I see you; and I am sorry to say, that will not be so soon as I designed, for I shall not be able to leave the country this fortnight yet, on account of some business which has occurred since I wrote last. The callico is to be but yard wide.

My health is almost established, thanks to your good wishes: I hope I may preserve it at our assizes, to which I am just summoned. Health and happiness attend my dear Fanny, and take me in their train!

LETTER LX.

My dearest FANNY,

I VENTURED no farther than this, to-day, for I had a great deal of rain on the road, and was afraid to push on thro' the night air, for the three reasons I gave you this morning, as the sole things which could make me uneasy at the thoughts

of death. I am now very well, thank your asking, have just dined, and am drinking your health.

I thought, with great pleasure, of your meeting me at Laughlins-town, upon my return; but I do hereby release you from that promise, for, coming by the house, I saw, even this bad day, three genteel coaches, two hacks, a post-chaise, and two four-wheeled chairs unharnessed before the door; now it is possible, and very probable, that some person, in every one of these equipages, know both you and me; and the pleasures I enjoy, in your love, are not from open vanity, but secret pride, and,

“ Like a good conscience, solid joy supplies.”

Of which, whoever could boast, never knew the sweets. I would steal to your love, as misers to their wealth; lest the suspicion of it might tempt others to “where my treasure is; for there, indeed, my heart is also.” You see, what a Platonick you have made me; for I speak of intellectual joys now, as warmly, as I used to do of the pleasures of sense. But, in short, what I mean by all this, is, that, since our meeting at Laughlins-town, would not have the charming consequences of such a frolick appearance, I should not chuse to act “Hypocrisy against the devil,” and leave the world room to imagine me, more happy than I am.

At some distance from this town, I amused myself with one of the most curious pieces of exquisite bad taste, I have ever met with; and which put me in mind of that epistle of Pope’s which we read together, the other evening. It was the *deceptive vísú* of a ship in sail, on the top of a mountain, which, I suppose, terminated the vísú of some

to

LETTERS *between*

absurd fellow's *unimprovement* thereabouts; which shews mistress Johnson's expression*, hinted in one of your † letters, tho' a tautology in sense, not so much so in terms. This may be ranked among the unnatural pleasures, I mentioned to you lately, with which the dæmon of *Caprice* has possessed the human brutes of this world. The curious artist too, lest any of his merit should be lost, by the natural appearance of the object, had placed it on the left hand, while the sea was roaring on the right, that the paltry contrivance might be obvious to the meanest capacity; or, if there was any design to deceive the view, it was, by fixing the ship among a parcel of horrid rocks, so that one might suggest to himself a shocking object of distress, thrown up there, by the raging of a tempest, or the violence of an earthquake; which but heightened the idea of false taste, and put me in mind of several famous pieces of painting, which have displeased me greatly; such as storms, battles, cities on fire, executions, chained slaves, &c. which I never could endure the contemplation of, for a moment. The only thing which can recommend, in such pieces, is, their being well drawn; but this only renders them still more shocking, as a bad man needs but sense and courage, to be a devil.

There are some much admired passages in poetry, which I am dissatisfied with, for the same reason; and that a relish for such things is an instance of false taste, I think may be deduced from this one reflection, that providence has so wisely and justly ordained it, that nothing, which gives us pain, can possibly give us pleasure; except overcoming

* Improved for the better.

† One of the letters which are lost.

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the distempers of the body, or the vices of the mind.

Adieu ! my dear Moralist, and believe me

Ever your's,

HENRY.

L E T T E R L X I.

Dear FANNY,

I Received yours, and hope my last letter will sufficiently explain the mistake of the post.

I do assure you that you have no rival at Maiden-hall, but one, which is at present sitting on the table, and endeavouring to snatch the pen out of my hand ; but, according to the fashion of the world, you have nothing to apprehend from her, for she is not one I love, but only one who loves me. In short, she has taken a most unnatural affection to me, for every other *Cat* in the house flies for it, when I appear ; but *Sultana Puss*, from a kitten, has solicited my regards, followed me about the house, and mewed at the door, when I was shut up in my room. She lay with me too for some time, till her snoring disturbed me. She is an odd animal also, in other respects ; for she really is very low spirited sometimes, and her nerves are so weak (which I attribute to her drinking tea in a morning without eating) that the least loud word sets her trembling ; so that I dare not chide an awkward house maid, for fear of putting madam into one of her hysterics. I design taking her to town with me, for advice of physicians ; and perhaps a creature which is reported to have nine lives, may at length find benefit from their kill or cure prescriptions.

E 5

I have

I have often laughed at the simplicity of Montaigne playing with his cat, but shall henceforward accept him among the philosophers.

Ma chere, adieu !

Et croyez moi

Que je suis,

Sans contredit,

Le plus fidele de vos Amis.

LETTER LXII.

I AM extremely glad to find my dear Harry a votary to Montaigne ; he was always a favourite of mine ; and I am greatly surprized that I never thought of introducing him in our epistolary conversations. I know not whether he is numbered among the philosophers, but I think the very amusement, which you have copied from him, speaks him a more practical one than any I have heard of. For, as to subdue our passions is the end of all philosophy, he gave the highest proof of having reduced his to a perfect calm, when he was content with so trifling an employment as fiddling with his cat. However I have yet one doubt, which possibly may derogate from his merit, whether he had not passed his grand climacteric, before he found out this charming amusement. I have often been delighted with him, even when I was a child, for remarking, “ That there is a certain general “ claim of kindness and benevolence, which every “ species of creatures has a right to from us.” And think it much to be regretted, that this generous maxim is not more attended to in the affair of education* ; for this reason, I admire you for

* ——— primoque a cæde ferarum

Incaluisse putem maculatum sanguine ferrum.

OVID.

en-

endeavouring to obtain the best advice you can, for the recovery of your favourite's health; since the most refined philosophy allows, that we have reason to believe the sensations of the smallest animals and insects are, in some cases, as exquisite as those of creatures of far more enlarged dimensions: my darling Shakespear seems to be of this opinion, when he says, "The poor beetle that we tread upon, in corp'ral sufferance, feels a pang as great, as when a giant dies." But what amazes me is, that you, who love retirement so much, have not found out a more rational companion than your cat; for I am of Balsac's opinion, "*Que la solitude est certainement une belle chose! Mais il y a plaisir d'avoir quelqu'un, qui en sçache repondre, a qui on puisse dire, de tems en tems, que la solitude est une belle chose **."

But I must not forget, that, as often as I wish for your company, you may as often wish to be alone, and that I may perhaps be, at this instant, breaking in upon one of those hours, which you desire to enjoy without interruption. I shall no longer detain you, than while I add, that

I am, and ever shall be,
affectionately yours,

FRANCES.

* Tully has a stronger sentiment upon this subject. Verum ergo id est, si quis in cœlum ascendisset, naturamque mundi et pulchritudinem siderum perspexisset, insuavem illam admirationem ei fore, quæ jucundissima fuisset, si aliquem cui narraret habuisset.

CIC. de. Amic.

LETTER LXIII.

Dear FANNY,

Castledermot.

THE rain overtook me at Kilcullen, and there I wished for you (as I fear I should have done, though you had been present) in vain all night, the life-long night. Between that stage and this, the rain so moistened my clay again this morning, that here I am obliged to wish for you, both day and night; but, in which term I desire you most, I do assure you, I am sometimes doubtful; for you alone of all your sex, young and handsome, ever brought it any thing near a moot point, whether I should chuse the possession of your love or friendship; if, by naming one, I should be precluded from the other. In such a dilemma, I should consider myself, like the paradise of Erasmus, suspended between heaven and hell; for though enjoyment, either of your conversation or person, would be heaven to me, the deprivation of either would be hell. This equality of sentiment is not owing to any luckiness in my composition, setting the balance between the rationale and irrationale of my constitution; but to your extraordinary merit, which makes me think the enjoyment of your person would be almost rational; and, in return, the sprightliness of your converse, and poignancy of your wit, "darts through the soul, and almost gives enjoyment."

I left town with a cold, and my frequent wettings have so much increased it, that I am, at present, as * "hoarse as bondage." I shall therefore stay here to-night, and quack myself; for to-

* "Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud."

ROMEO and JULIET.

morrow

HENRY and FRANCES. 85

morrow I will reach Maidenhall, *coute qui coute*, because I expect to receive a letter from you there; and besides the impatience I have for hearing from you, I have so much good breeding, with regard to every thing which relates to you, that it extends itself even to your letters; which I feel myself ashamed for, if, by any chance, they lie on my table, for a moment, before I kiss the seal, and ravish the contents.

I salute you now in sack-whey — Oh! that it were the posset.

Adieu! Adieu!

L E T T E R LXIV.

Dear FANNY,

I SEND you the lines I mentioned to you lately, somewhat more correct than I could repeat them from memory.

On Absence.

Dear to my soul, while thou'rt away,
I rather pass, than spend the day;
Thy absence clips the wings of time,
And every clock forgets to chime.
With thee L'Allegro is my song,
Il Penseroso tunes my tongue
When thou art gone — the midnight masque,
The wanton dance, and sprightly flask,
The joyous friends, and flowing bowl,
Have lost the power to warm my soul:
But, like Prometheus' man of clay,
Ere he had felt the solar ray,
I stand unmov'd, and wait in dull suspense,
Thy heav'nly charms to warm me into sense.

LETTER LXV.

I RECEIVED my dear Harry's letter, and, spite of my resentment at your tedious silence, I find I must forgive. I was determined never to write to you again, but you have too often proved the weakness of my resolution, and, as Prior says,

"Forc'd to doat on thee thy own way,
"I chide thee first, and then obey."

I thank you for your poetry; I think it extremely pretty, but am jealous of the person it was first addressed to, tho' her right was prior to mine.

In the second line, I find you have aptly alluded to Addison's distinction between *spending* our time, and letting it *pass*. The second couplet is truly poetical, "Clips the wings of time, and clocks forgetting to chime." I think you have, with great beauty and judgment, observed that rule mentioned in the Essay on Criticism, that the words should seem an echo to the sense: as for example, "With thee, L'Allegro is my song," goes off briskly, and the line is short. "Il Penserofo tunes my tongue when thou art gone." — Here the words move heavily along; and, in order to lengthen out the line, you have suspended the cadence till the middle of the next. The same criticism, I think, may be made through the whole, and the last line but one is a fine one in this style, "I stand-un-mov'd-and-wait-in-dull-suspence." — I fancy I see the statue.

I shall be quite piqued, if you do not essay something in the poetic taste, in compliment to me. I am such a Lilliputian subject, that the poetry of a ring would serve me: I mean to express my

my merits; but I should chuse you would rather expatiate on my faults, as the more copious subject would give you a better opportunity of shewing your wit: and take notice, that if you ever again hint any thing of that kind, in plain prose, I shall call it downright scolding.

I should not finish this letter so soon, but that I find you expect half a dozen ~~for~~ one; so I must husband what little I have to say, in the best manner I can, by dividing it into so many posts.

Adieu!

LETTER LXVI.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I AM not at all surprized at your story of Mrs. ———'s second failure; for indeed I am not apt to be surprized, when I hear of such things at the first. This is not owing to any slight opinion I have of women, but to the knowledge I have of human nature, which, with my observation upon the careless and improper education given to most young women, gives me rather frequent surprize, that we do not more often hear stories of this kind.

Rochefaucalt, who is a severe moralist, as most of the French are, says, "There are many women who never had an Affair, but there never was a woman, who had but One." Which shews, that he thought the first step the only difficulty. Yet I have known some devout sinners, who though not able to defend themselves, while yet in a state of innocence, vainly imagine to recover virtue from their fall; like the fable of Antæus, who is said to have gained fresh strength, when Hercules threw him on the ground. Ovid is severe too on this subject,

subject, "*Laſa pudicitia eſt, deperit illa ſemel*:" Which paſſage is too groſſy tranſlated, to be quoted here. Rowe has a ſtrong line in his Shore :

" They ſet, like ſtars which fall to riſe no more."

However, I do not judge ſo hardly, in this matter, as the generality of people do: I agree with them indeed, that, when women fall from wantonneſs, or vice, it is very probable they may ſin on to the end of life; but a woman may be overcome ſo many other ways, exceſs of love, too great confidence in the lover's honour, circumvented by fraud, or overpowered by ſurprize, that an adventure of this kind does not always betoken a failure in virtue; and a perſon, injured in any of theſe ways, may poſſibly recover ſtrength from their miſfortunes, as a bone is ſaid to knit firmer in the broken part than in the ſound.

The ſtory you tell me of ——— ſurprizes me more than the other, tho' it is of a piece with his known character; for, of all human vices, avarice aſtoniſhes me moſt, as it appears to me the moſt unreaſonable, and unnatural too. I ſhould think, that miſers may turn prodigals, upon this principle, that they may do ſo without coſt, for he who ſpends his own fortune, certainly lives at the expence of his heir †.

You are welcome to buy the books you mention for me; for tho' I have read them before, I think they will not diſgrace my ſtudy; and this will give you an opportunity of reading them yourſelf.

Adieu!

HENRY.

† *Cuncta manus avidas fugient heredis, amico quæ dederis animo.* Mon.

LETTER LXVII.

Dear FANNY,

I AM extremely angry at Mrs. ———, for misrepresenting the story you allude to: I said indeed the words to her, and quoted them from a sprightly lady of my acquaintance, but mentioned no name; and, as there was certainly wit in them, she might probably attribute them to you, and meant to compliment you, with supposing you the author. It was Mrs. ——— who made use of those expressions, on the occasion I told her. I declare, that, in any part, either of our conversation or correspondence, I never remember you to have used any expression, “less modest than the speech of *“ Prudes,”* or to have hinted, or even seemed to relish the least double entendre; and I assure you, I have often wondered that a person, who has as much wit, spirit, and wildness in her imagination, as any one I know, should have, in reality, more delicacy in her sentiments, and more decency in her expressions, than I ever met with in any other woman.

It is upon this account, that I give you the credit of more wit, than other women; as that beauty must have greater charms, who pleases a man, when she is clothed, than are necessary to move him, when she is naked.

But indeed, I think, in general, that when lewdness, or prophaneness, are called in, as helps to wit, they but betray the weakness of it; as narrow waters mark their limits, by exposing the shallows.

Cowley speaks very prettily upon this subject, but I need not quote, because you have him by heart.

Adieu !

LETTER LXVIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM, thank God, quite well to-day, but must be cautious: I shall stay at home most part of the day, and only take a chair for an hour, to drink tea with you, and return the manuscripts. It was an entertainment to read over most of the letters I had wrote to you, since the commencement of our acquaintance, during the course of a correspondence remarkable for its regularity and constancy. I read them in a confused manner, because there are but few of them dated; and I was sorry I had not yours in town, to bring them face to face; which would have been a great amusement to me, during this confinement, as my head was not well enough to venture upon more abstruse studies. I find you have destroyed a great many of my letters; for I remember a folio of advice, which I suppose you mistook for scolding, and threw into the fire. I had a mind to serve the rest after the same manner, and only spared them, because you had done so.

I send you West on the Employment of Time; which is worth reading; not, for saying any thing new, but for collecting together, upon so important a subject, the sense, not *opinions*, of mankind, the thinking part. Read the preface last; which, I think, might be better filed an appendix.

Hanswells

LETTER LXIX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Wrote on the death of J. K. Esq;

HE was a man of most excellent composition.— His characteristics were many and extraordinary. He was generous, without extravagance; an economist, without parsimony; had pride, without vanity; and was friendly, without professing; a libertine, without vice; religious, without bigotry; and an enthusiast, without fanaticism. “He was a man, take him for all in all, you shall not find his fellow;” or, to have examined him by parts, you would have found each character perfect; like the division of matter, where every atom contains, in itself, the dimensions of solidity.

He is dead,—but thou art alive! The Lord’s will was done in the first instance, and mine in the second. Accept now an undivided heart, and live long to help me to forget my grief.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER LXX.

THE pleasure that I received from my dear Harry’s letter could alone compensate for the pain I felt from your unusual silence; but you have made me large amends, and I can readily forget all that is past, provided you do not repeat your fault. I am so thoroughly persuaded of your tenderness for me, that I know, I need but tell you how much your silence affects me, never to feel the effects of it more.

In

In short, my heart's dear Harry, I am quite charmed with that manly fondness, that elegance of love, which you express in your last dear letter; and, for the future, I shall say, with Emma,

"Doubt shall for ever quit my strengthen'd heart,
 "And anxious jealousy's corroding smart;
 "Nor other inmate shall inhabit there,
 "But soft belief, young joy, and pleasing care."

In spite of medicines, I grow worse every day; and am really reduced to a most melancholy state; but you, my dearest Harry, have brought back calm content to visit me, and all may yet be well. I have not known a flight of spirits, since you left town, till I received your last; and then I could not help bursting into Othello's exclamation, "If
 "I were now to die, 'twere now to be most
 "happy, &c."

I cannot help thinking that fate seems averse to my recovery; for the sun, "as if the sun could envy," denies his wonted beams; nor with more regret beholds me drooping, than the bells of lillies. I have, for this month past, had a severe cough, and constant pain across my chest; I am worn to a skeleton, and yet look as well as I ever did; but far more delicate. My disorder is extremely polite, for, tho' it deprives me of the reality, it leaves me the appearance of health; and I am so much a woman, to forgive the substance, for the shadow.

I think you have done the strictest justice to our fair friend's character; she is indeed a charming girl—Pray tell me when you think of coming to town—I fear you are grown so passionately fond of Maidenhall, that you have no wish for any thing beside; nor even send a sigh, in pity to your banished friends. However, let the time of our exile be limited, for when we have a goal in view, the race will seem less tedious.

My

My hand trembles so violently, that I can scarce hold my pen : I dare say, you will find it difficult to decypher my Hebrew characters ; I will therefore leave puzzling, and in the plainest (which are generally the sincerest terms) assure you, that

I am, and ever shall be,

Your faithfully affectionate,

FRANCES.

[Some letters are lost here.]

LETTER LXXI.

My dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED yours this morning, and do assure you, without compliment, that it wanted nothing but your being in the right, to be the best wrote letter I ever read. I commend every thing but the injustice of it ; like a certain exile from Athens, who could not forbear applauding, and repeating to strangers, an oration of Demosthenes, by which the wretch was banished. The cause of many of our quarrels has been owing, as at present, to your never considering any thing, but the matter before you. When you receive my letters, you find some things to displease you ; but never recollect your own, which gave the provocation. You wrote me lately two of the most mortifying letters, which could be well imagined, and now seem surprized I should resent them. Consider that the height of our picques is, always, in proportion to our love ; and, if ——— had charged me with all the cruel things you did, I should not have offended her, by any reply, inconsistent with the natural complaisance I have for even the most disagreeable of your sex. You say several things, which when I require an explanation of, you cut me short, by an-

swering me, you was only in jest. These things are certainly inconsistent, at least; and surely, if you had reflected the least on them, when you say, "you so strictly examined your whole conduct," I am persuaded, you would have been generous, and ingenuous enough to acknowledge, I had good reason to be provoked at being puzzled by contradictory appearances, and jested with, in matters which both mortified and alarmed me. I confess, indeed, that I have many faults; but do not, my dear, so vainly acquit yourself of any.

I really think you have many valuable qualities, and a great number of agreeable ones; and I have been always endeavouring to discern them, from some irregular flights, and romantick whims, which are, by no means, any ornament to your understanding. I was but acting the good farmer's part, and winnowing the chaff from among the wheat; for, could I but rid you of a few light errors, I think you need not the addition of one merit, to make you perfect. I have therefore, on many occasions, restrained and disguised my love and tenderness for you, like a cautious parent, lest it should but increase those irregular whims, and romantick dreams, which I have often wished out of your charming composition. My actions, I think, kept on still one constant tenor, and always shall; because my principles are in my own power; my expressions and manners indeed often varied, as your behaviour affected them; because my passions are in yours: You can increase, or abate my fondness, but it is not in the power of the rest of the world, or, what is more, even of yourself, to alter the obstinate and determined purpose of my actions towards you; for where, as I have reason to apprehend, from the strong hints you gave me in your last letter, the poverty of my nature, and ungenerousness of my principles, shall leave me weak
for

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 95

for so good a work, I will even borrow the semblance of those virtues, which may best assist me, to acquit myself as a man of honour to you :

“ So shall dissembling once be virtuous in me.”

I confess, that the manner of my invitation to Maidenhall, had not all the decorum, it should have had, at another time ; but consider the mortifications and picque, I laboured under just then, from your letters and behaviour, and it will convince you of the truth of what I have just said, that your actions cannot lessen my kindness, tho' they may destroy my complaisance.

Farewel !

HENRY.

L E T T E R LXXII.

Dear FANNY,

LAST post I received a letter from ———, the answer of which he desires may be inclosed to you, because, he says, you know where to direct to him. From which hint I gather two things, both equally disagreeable to me ; that you correspond with him, and that he still knows you write to me ; and you know, it was without my consent or approbation, that he was, at first, let into the secret. That either of these things gives me offence, my dear Fanny, proceeds plainly from an high sense of honour, and a generous regard for you. If I could basely indulge a vanity of this kind, I do not know any thing could answer the end so well, as the letting your correspondence with me be publickly known. That it was not, as I find now, a particular favour to me, might indeed humble the vanity of it, but would not lessen the pleasure ; for I

take this opportunity to assure you, that tho' your letters should come, even thro' the press, to my hands, I do not know any thing could give me a more agreeable entertainment; and I should then only chide you as Alexander did Aristotle, for publishing his works; because what was before his particular study, and the highest of his retired pleasures, more estimable than all his conquests, was then become common to all the world.

It is the nature of man, to render himself often miserable, merely for the vanity of being thought happy; but I declare, I would rather rejoice at being thought unhappy, than even suspected to be otherwise, at your least expence. If my love, my friendship, did not incline me to this, honour, nay common manhood, would require it from me, in the nice circumstances of our loves, at present. My character is libertine, your fortunes are small, your experience of the world but little, your age young, and your guardian old. In such a situation, you should take care, not to trust to the charitable opinion of the world, who will hardly be brought to believe, that either our conversation or correspondence, are upon such innocent subjects, as in truth they are; and if any surmises should arise to the contrary, as I fear this indiscretion with regard to ——— (whose notions are not much out of the common road of things) may give occasion for, it would not be in my power to justify you; nor indeed can any thing a man may say, or swear, upon such occasions, either condemn, or acquit a woman, in my opinion; for, if he traduces her character, I should think he might do so as well out of falshood, as baseness; and, if he vindicates it, I might apprehend that he should do so as much out of honour as truth. When I say, I am displeased with your writing to ———, I am not jealous of your love, but your character, which I have very
honest

honest reasons to be careful of. If you understand me right, in any reproof I ever gave you, it would but improve your love and esteem for me; which will be a fair return for that warm passion and sincere friendship I at present feel towards my heart's dearest Fanny.

Adieu !

LETTER LXXIII.

Dear FANNY,

THE alliances you mention from the public prints, either by marriage, or political treaty cannot give us that security for a general peace, which you so piously wish for. No ties, but its own state policy, govern even the best; and no principle, but ambition sways the worst of princes. It is certain, that political morals, and private, may easily be evinced the same; and the obligations between state and state, the same as between man and man. Nay, much stronger the reason may seem upon the former; yet, it is astonishing, that an opinion so obvious should still be new; for there are few authors who confine political maxims, or what they term reasons of state, to the same strictness they do private morals*. I hope it is more owing to a wrong judgment upon this subject, than to the depravity of human nature, that so much injustice, and cruel havock, is made in the world, by the lawless ambition of princes; that liberty, property, or life, are safe, no longer than our stronger neighbour is pleased to be at rest; and that the sons of the earth, like the army of Cadmus, rise up, only to destroy each other.

* Sextus the VIth. said, " It is short thinking that makes conscience impracticable, and politics to fall foul upon morals."

The last article of the French paragraphs is really so ridiculous, that I cannot determine whether the publisher is in jest or earnest. Adieu !

LETTER LXXIV.

My dear FANNY,

MRS. ———'s behaviour will certainly confirm the world's opinion of her for some time past. True virtue is modest in its defence ; but frailty, like cowardice, puts on the air of a bully, to disguise its weakness *.

There is nothing which women resent so highly, as the free manner, with which the world judge and speak of their actions. I own that I have often myself joined with them, in condemning such hasty censures ; but, upon more general reflection, I can't help agreeing with the world, that few women ever lose their reputation, till they have, at least, deserved to do so ; for, tho' some may escape the actual guilt, who have suffered the imputation of it, yet their indiscretions must have justly drawn upon them the censure of the world ; and, having gone so far, they have done their part ; and to speak like a man of gallantry, it is the lover's fault if they go no farther.

As I have really a great tenderness for the *fair sex*, it often provokes me to hear some people, either ignorantly or maliciously, pretend to justify their characters, at the same time that they acknowledge all appearances to be strong against them ; for this is even to allow they had the vice and folly of a harlot, but wanted her only virtue, courage. How cruel and severe must it be, to say, a

* *Tussis pro crepitu*, an art
Under a cough to slur a ———

HUD.

WOMAN

woman had no one quality, or principle, to preserve her from perdition, but cowardice! and how unhappy must it be for her too, when she finds this "hypocrisy against the Devil" will not avail her, either in this world, or the next! for as the "superstition" is seldom indulged to the speculation of the curious, people can only judge, as Iago expresses it, "by circumstances leading to the door of truth;" and, as for the next world, I fear Heaven needs no overt act, to prove loose morals treason.

You see, my dear, what a different side of this question you have reclaimed me to; you have not only won my heart, but my morals too; not that the cowardly despair of conquest would ever have brought my indomitable spirit to yield, 'till, by weighing well your worth, against your person, I thought I should gain, like * Porus, by my defeat.

* He was conquered by Alexander, who in reward of his virtue and bravery, bestowed a greater kingdom on him than he had lost.

L E T T E R LXXV.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED your letter from Liverpool, which, like most of your letters of late, was very pretty, and very provoking. If you had as much ingenuousness as ingenuity, we should have been always upon better terms than we are. However, you are honest enough to confess yourself a woman; which, at the same time, accounts naturally for your inconsistency, and gives me comfortable hopes, that we may again be very good friends; for I have great sympathy in me with meer mortal women, but have the most clumsy address you can imagine towards your infallible divinities.

I do not know any person who can tell a story better, and to whom it is more advantage to be put upon the defensive; your letter is a remarkable instance of this; for it is equally filled with literal, as well as metaphorical *turns*. However, I shall not dwell any longer on this head, since you are become a woman; but conclude this letter with referring you to the — Ode of the — book of Horace, which you may meet with translated by several hands; to which, desiring your answer sincerely, I subscribe myself

Your constant friend, lover,
and humble servant.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dear FANNY,

I AM just returned from my circuit, and found your letter here, which I was doubly pleased at; to hear you were well, and to hear you were returning to Ireland. I laughed a good deal at myself, just after I had wrote my last letter to you, to think of my carelessness about the number of the book, and ode of Horace, I alluded to. I did not exactly remember chapter and verse, when I was writing; but left blanks to be filled up, when I returned to my study, and forgot it, 'till the day after my letter went. However, I am extremely satisfied at my mistake now, as you so quickly found out the allusion. Le Sage entend a demi môt; and that I hope from thence, it was from a strong sympathy between us on the same subject.

“Donec gratus eram tibi,” &c.

I am sorry, tho', to hear you call this but an armistice, for, I assure you, I sincerely meant a lasting

ing peace; but I suppose you know your own temper to be so like the French, warm, lively, and restless, that you look on all terms made with you, as with them, to be only truces; gaining breath to renew the fight. You say modestly, you have no hopes of *regaining* my friendship, and you are in the right of it, in strictness of speech, for you have indeed never lost it, nor are you likely to do so; for, as I have sometimes said, or meant to say to you, I find you have my friendship, in spite of yourself, and my love, in spite of myself. And on these terms we shall always be, from a happy discovery I have lately made, that you have been, and shall always be, in the right, in every article of your life. Not that this truth appears to me with all the strength of demonstration I could wish; but I read you, as I do Euclid; impatient to come to some pleasant practical problem, I take all the theorems for granted, which lead to so charming an end.

I delivered your letter and pantin to my sister; she leaves me soon, and will answer you, I believe, in person.

Adieu!

H I A T U S.

LETTER LXXVII.

WHEN last I wrote to my dear Harry, I must confess myself to have been a good deal disordered, both in body and mind. I am still very ill; but much recovered, by your last letter from the lowness of spirits, into which your former had thrown me. I own I have too much pride to bear indifference with patience; and that calm philosophy, which you have manifested in some instances,

where it could not be feigned ; and that unconcernedness, with which you sometimes talk of death or parting, have too much the air of it.

“ Indifference, clad in wisdom’s guise,

“ All fortitude of mind supplies.”

I took the air this morning to Chapel-Izod, with my aunt and some other company ; from whom I insensibly strayed to that part of the river, where I suddenly recollected you first spoke to me of love ; and upon comparing the difference between your former and latter behaviour, I burst into tears ; and with much difficulty prevented myself from being discovered by the company, who then came upon me : So that I had but just time to make this short, but melancholy reflection—That those tender sentiments, and fond endearments, which you then expressed, were as irrecoverably lost to me, as the waters, which at that time, glided at our feet ; and that what you profess now, is only the same in appearance, as is the present current. Oh ! for a power, without guilt, to dispatch the present time, or to retrieve the past !

Your philosophy, perhaps, may smile at my weakness ; but I find a sort of honest satisfaction in lay my whole heart open to you, with all its follies ; perhaps I have a pride in it too, as I am conscious that it contains not a thought or sentiment, but what your virtue would approve ; tho’ there are foibles enough to be the jest and scorn of your
“ manly sense and reason.”

I don’t know why I write ; they say it eases an oppressed mind, but I am sure that I feel mine much heavier than when I began—There are to whom a state of doubt is secondary bliss, whose sanguine hopes preoccupy possession : To me ’tis misery, whose boding fears, forestall each disappointment.

Adieu !

FRANCES.

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 103.

Just about this time Frances was informed by a friend, that Henry had shewn several of her letters to a person, who having but *one way* of thinking, seemed to construe them to the disadvantage of her character. This alarmed her, and in high resentment she wrote the following letter to him.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

S I R,

YOU have behaved with great dishonour. You have shewed my letters to ———, and you could not have any temptation to this but what was disingenuous: For it was impossible for a person of liberal education to form any sort of judgment upon them, except what must be to the disadvantage of my character.

Farewel for life,

FRANCES.

On the receipt of this, Henry posted up to Dublin, and went to pay a visit to Frances, which was refused. The next morning he wrote the following letter.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

M A D A M,

I APPROVE of the resentment you have shewn; and am so pleased with the propriety of your behaviour, upon so nice an occasion, that I readily forgive the hastiness of your censure, and shall do you the justice I owe to your merit, by vindicating myself to you from any baseness in the particular you hint at.

The person you mention has been an old friend of mine; I have a good regard for him. He had been for some time engaged in a Platonick amour, which, tho' there was nothing criminal in, I often advised him against, as the indiscretion of it might possibly become fatal. I found that the principal thing that attached him was the lady's letters, which he challenged all literature to produce any writings equal to. From a meer impulse of friendship, I read one or two of yours to him, which soon convinced our inamorato that his correspondent was not such a heroine, as he imagined, in sense, stile, taste or sentiment.

I did not mention your name, upon my honour: but, if you doubt that *asseveration*, let the vanity you seem to suspect bear testimony for me. Your writings must have hinted an higher rank in life for my fair incognita, than either your station, fortune, or education intitle you to. But his knowledge of your name was owing to an imprudence of your own, when he and I were lately in Dublin together.

Whatever improper use he has made of this discovery, he is answerable to me for, but I stand acquitted to you of any thing disingenuous or base. I came to town for no other purpose but to justify myself before you; I attend your commands, and am with true respect, and sincere regards, madam, &c.

HENRY.

To which the following short answer was returned.

LETTER LXXX.

S I R,

I AM sorry for this adventure—perhaps, I ought not to be sorry for it. You hint very justly, that I have neither rank or fortune; I have therefore nothing but character to depend upon; and the surest method which my prudence inspires me with, to defend that best, that only treasure, is never to converse or correspond with you more.

If you have any spark of honour remaining, you will not refuse to exchange our letters; and as this is, probably, the last request I shall ever make to you, I shall be obliged if you'll send me your miniature picture, which I refused before—I mean it as a talisman, to guard my too sincere, and unsuspecting nature, against the arts and baseness of every other man. One look of that piece, like Medusa's head, will harden my heart to stone; for in love, contrary to religion, 'tis want of faith, that saves us.

May success attend you in every virtuous scheme of life. Amen!

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER LXXXI.

HENRY to FRANCES.

MADAM,

I SHALL obey your commands as soon as I return to the country. I remember the reason for your refusing to accept of my picture was, that you did not think it like. It will be, therefore, a very proper appendage to attend your letters, as I am convinced they were as little the transcript of your

F 5

heart.

heart. True love would have stood a stronger trial than what you have been weakly tempted with. As there are some singular constitutions, that never catch the small-pox, there are also some more extraordinary natures unsusceptible of love. This, however, being an imperfection in their frame, they feel themselves often afflicted with very awkward sensations; a vacancy in their hearts, an indetermination in their minds, and a certain tediousness of life; to relieve which, such *anomalous* persons are obliged to assume an amour, and by frequent feigning, come at last to deceive themselves: As a man, who turns often round, will feel all the giddiness of one who is drunk; but both these cheats are immediately detected, if they shall venture to act or speak *rationaly*, under such personated characters. I deny your allusion; religion is love, reciprocally, and a deficiency of faith cannot be orthodox. Fanny has imposed upon herself, but has now undeceived me.

I wish you security from knaves, and a man of merit success in your favour.

Farewel.

HENRY.

P. S. I shall return your letters without exchange. You may burn mine.

As soon as Henry went into the country, he obeyed Frances's commands, and wrote her the following letter at the same time.

LETTER LXXXII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Belmont.

I HAVE brought your letters thus far, that I might flatter myself with the possession of them, half a day longer; and that they may be the less time
between

between your hands and mine, as I can intercept the Stage this day, at dinner.

I was several times tempted to break my word with you, for the first time, I declare, lest the recollection, which these dear memorandums may give you, of your having once loved me so well, may provoke you now to hate me, even more than you do. I return them then to you as the only equivalent I could ever make you, for their value; and from a principle, I have somewhere before mentioned, that I shall never desire any tie over the person I love, but their own inclinations; and this is the reason, perhaps, that I never married yet, tho' never tempted to it, but once in my life; and for their sake, more than my own, rejoice now that it never happened.

In return for your letters, you offered me mine, but I desired you to burn them; which I now revoke, leaving them intirely at your disposal; for the only reason I had for destroying them was, that they might never be ashamed, in company with *yours*; but, as I desire you will keep *them* safe, mine may serve to explain or illustrate some passages; for foils they need not.

I often refused you your letters, and should ever have continued obstinate in that point, while I had any hopes of pleasing you otherways; but, in that despair, part madly with the only things, which can please myself now.

In order to make this sacrifice the stronger, I read over all your letters, before I parted with them; tho' this was a fond folly, as I am very sure, I had every one of them by heart before. And now, my ever best-beloved girl, accept these returned, dear pledges, as a sacrifice fit for the gods; religiously so, as I flatter myself, from former recollection, the heart joined in the address. Let them boast of inspiration, if heavenly spirits can taste of

vanity; of this loan you have acquitted yourself back with interest; for the rays of inspiration, like sun beams, give light in the direct line, but owe their heat to reflection.

I kept all your letters, as they were wrote by you; and restore them now, because, I believe, you repent your ever having wrote them.

“ Lifeless charms, without the heart.”

I shall always remember, with love and gratitude, any kindness you ever shewed me; I unfeignedly forgive the severe treatment I have lately met with from you, and shall hereafter rest satisfied, in whatever light you are pleased to regard me,

As a lover, friend, companion,
or most humble and obedient servant,

HENRY.

LETTER LXXXIII.

S I R,

THOU' your politeness forbid your desiring an acknowledgment of the most trifling favour with regard to yourself, and the most material one with regard to me, that you have perhaps ever conferred; yet, as I never meant (tho' I may have failed in the execution of my design) to be out-done in generosity, I now think it incumbent on me to offer my thanks; not according to the value of the present, but to the design of the giver.—Were I not afraid of appearing insolent, or ungrateful, I need not have had recourse to this method of shewing my gratitude, since I could, with more ease to myself, and (I am sure) pleasure to you, have returned the obligation an hundred fold*; but the

* By returning his letters.

author,

author, whom I have oftenest quoted to you, and is, of course my greatest favourite, says, "It is the highest act of ingratitude to *over-pay* an obligation, which we receive from an *equal* or *superior*." — In which of these denominations you are pleased to file yourself, I shall on this occasion, subscribe myself,

Your most obliged,
and most obedient servant,
FRANCES.

LETTER LXXXIV.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Maidenhall.

I SHOULD have answered your letter sooner, but I waited 'till I came here; both because I have some pleasure in writing to you, from the scene, whence most of my letters were dated to you; and that I hope the inclosed * will be some apology for the freedom of writing to you now; not from the value of the present, but from the obedience I shall always be proud to shew to any request of yours. After the sacrifice I have lately made, you could have no reason to doubt of my compliance in this particular; or that I should refuse you the *shadow* of that substance, which, while it shall be enlivened with a spirit of sense, reflection, or gratitude, must be ever your's. Constant lovers need only the exchange of hearts; but fickle ones have need of tokens. Accept then of this, as it is the only way, I fear, is left me, of restoring my *image* to you. And having already, Fortune de l'amour, lost what I loved as well, and liked infinitely better than my-

* His picture.

self, I shall find no difficulty in parting with this second self, since you are pleased to act a part in Æsop's fables, and quit the substance, to embrace the shadow.

You see, I am resolved the correspondence shall not drop on my side, and indeed, I shall, with real transport, take advantage of every occasion, which will not appear presumption on my former happiness, of assuring you, that

I am with sincerity,

truth, and constancy, yours,

HENRY.

LETTER XXXV.

SIR,

I CANNOT recollect any period of my life, wherein I found myself more embarrassed than at this moment; as there is nothing I wish more earnestly to avoid, than a repetition of what now appears the most "assured weakness," I ever did, or can commit,—addressing you by letter.—

At the same time, the complaisance you have shewn to my requests, obliges me to think, (tho' my *thanks* can hardly be deemed an acknowledgment for your late favours) it must appear like ingratitude, not to offer *them*.

Accept then of the poor, but only return, that is in my power to make; and let me add my sincere wishes, that I may be able to preserve the *picture* you have sent, much longer, than you suffered me to do *that*, which I, unskillful, had drawn of you.

You say, "I have quitted the substance for the shadow." I think you are deceived; for I am sure there is more stability and truth in this miniature mimicry, than in most originals, I have ever known.

HENRY *and* FRANCES. 111

known. And yet I should even fear a disappointment in this, had I not, long since, proved the fallacy of sympathetick influence. Ixion's fate, thro' the greatest part of my life, has still been mine; but from your last present, and many other circumstances of my instant fortunes, I have reason to think the scene is, at length, inverted, and that shadows alone elude my grasp. If I am in an error, I beg you will not undeceive me; for I have taken great pains to arrive at that pitch of philosophy, common to all prudent mortals, of thinking, that whatever is out of my reach is not worth having.

Farewell!

Here ends my palinode.

LETTER LXXXVI.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I RECEIVED your letter, and shall continue the correspondence, while you will give me leave. Indeed I find something which pleases, and flatters me too much in any engagement with you, to be easily discouraged; for I sincerely think that, vain as you are, you do not know your own merit or value. Your writing, particularly, I really do not know any thing in English equal to, for delicacy of sentiment, or turn of expression. There are some faint traces of your point, and stile, in a few of the polite French authors, almost to persuade one they were imitations, if there were not such strong lines, in yours, of an original.

You say, "here ends my palinode;" but pray, where did it begin? What recantation have you made of your mistake, or unkind and unjust abuse of me? What answer have you given yet to a late letter

* letter of mine, where, giving you the full force of your argument against me, I will hazard my defence, in this world, or the next, upon my justification there made; where I was no more culpable, than if I had lent you a horse, which, by starting accidentally, had broke your leg. But, tho' it gave you no just *cause*, for your unkind treatment of me, I own it afforded you a plausible occasion, being already determined. Now, as your author Rochefaucault says, a woman never quits her first love, till she has engaged in a second, I shall be much obliged, if you will trust my confidence so far, as to let me know, who my rival is? Nor have you any thing to fear for him in this, from a wretch as impotent in means, as I have ever been in will, to be malicious. And indeed it would be madness in me to make my rivals in your love my enemies; for I am not vain enough to think myself able to stand against a multitude.

You have often unjustly charged me with seeking an opportunity of breaking with you; on whom, I pray, does that charge, ungenerous as it is, fall with the greatest justice, at present? You have yourself presented that fair occasion; and yet see the obstinacy of my attachment to you; and indeed the only malice of the rest of my life towards you shall be to convince you, and you only, how unkind and unjust so base a sentiment was of me.

I am, my dearest Fanny, your very sincere
and constant lover and friend.

P. S. I found the inclosed † after I wrote to you last, and send it kindly to you, as it will help to hide even my shadow from you.

* Letter LXXIX.

† The case of his picture.

Frances returned no answer to this letter, and the correspondence dropt here for several months, while Henry staid in the country. When he went up to town, as he knew all her acquaintance, he used to meet her often among her friends, but did not visit her himself. Their behaviour was perfectly well bred to each other, but a good deal constrained.

When Henry was leaving town he invited Frances, with two other ladies, to dine with him at Racool, on his way, which they consented to. It rained a great deal in the evening; the company was chearful, perfectly agreeable to each other; and, as there was a matron among them, Henry prevailed on them to stay all night, which they did, and play'd cards till morning.

At this meeting the lovers began to be a little more at ease with each other; they talked over their former correspondence, and canvassed the incident of their quarrel, which had left them for so long a while, upon such cool and reserved-terms.

Frances said, that she acquitted him of the least disingenuous meaning in shewing her letters, and that the good breeding of his whole behaviour, since that occurrence, had raised him to the highest pitch of her esteem, which inclined her again to cultivate a lasting friendship with him. She confessed also, that she had often regretted the loss she had sustained of his correspondence, and would be therefore well pleased if he would renew it, upon condition that he should not write any more in the stile of a lover, unless he might do so on such terms, as would sufficiently justify her to the world, in receiving addresses of that kind.

Henry told her, that his fortunes were not, at that time, independent enough to leave him at liberty to make any particular declaration, upon such an occasion: all he could say, at present, was, that
 he

he loved and esteemed her better than he did any other woman in the world, and that in all his dealings he would behave like a man of honour toward her. At the same time, he expressed some jealousy, as in letter LXXXI. that her regards for him were not as great, as her letters and assurances had formerly given him reason to believe, otherways she would not have broken off so abruptly, nor continued her distance and reserve so long, after the justification he had made for himself, in the LXXIXth letter.

Frances repented the charge against her ingenuousness and sincerity; but I need not repeat the defence she made for herself upon that occasion, because it was much to the same effect with the arguments urged in the LXXXVIIIth letter.

The first stage that Henry came to, after their parting, he recommenced the correspondence, by the following letter.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

H E N R Y to F R A N C E S.

YOU see my impatience of writing to you, which does not wait for the post, and has got the better of a hot, wet day, bad paper, pens, and ink; and a strong inclination to sleep; to pay me for last night's excess.

I hope you all got safe to town, and found yourselves all safe in town. I beg to know with what grace ye were differently accosted by wise men and parents; for it is a vast amusement to me, to hear how innocent frolicks are treated by sensible, well-disposed Christians, who know anything better than human nature, or the world.

I recant my error, my dearest Fanny, and here throw my palinode at your feet. That I was loved,
let

let my vanity now confess, which my humility made me doubt before. It was a madness to doubt at first, according to a certain definition of it, a reasoning right upon wrong principles. I thought it gross to sense, that I should be capable of inspiring that soft, tender passion; I thought it possible, indeed, I might gain a friend, but never hoped to be able to win a mistress; so used to flatter myself, as Addison does Pope, upon his eclogues; that, if they are not pastorals, they are something better. Another reason I had to suspect I was not loved, was, that I feared I was no longer so; and true love, like true hanging, or drowning, according to my notion, is not to be remedied on this side the grave. I have observed to you before, that true love, like the small-pox, never attacks us but once; and reason good, because it lasts for life. It is a kind of free paradise-stock, which can admit of no inoculation; so luxuriant, that it is impatient of pruning, nor suffers itself to be twined into espaliers. A scion of it was stolen by Adam, when he was banished the garden of Eden; who, to repair his crime, as much as in him lay, bequeathed this divine plant to such of his posterity, who should prefer nakedness to knowledge, and piously attend to the voice of Nature, in open defiance of every preacher, from the serpent, down to H—ns. Consider of what has been said, &c.

HENRY.

 LETTER LXXXVIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

July 1, 1750.

I AM much obliged for the impatience you express of writing to me; and sincerely wish I could return the compliment with sincerity. But at last
that

that quick spirit, you have so often complained of, is quite extinct. There are so few things in life, which can give me pleasure, that I cannot help regretting the change in my sentiments with regard to writing, as, by losing my relish for it, I have lost one of my principal amusements.

If a little recollection recalled the evidences of truth to your mind, I am pleased the conversation arose; which, at the time it happened, so much displeased me. I know not how to suppose (without having the meanest opinion of you) that you could ever entertain a doubt. If I thought it were possible you could, I should only say, may your crime be your punishment! for "he who suspects, deserves to find it true." As all matters of this kind are now, and ever shall be, as tho' they had never been, you may be well assured, I shall never give you, or myself, the trouble of endeavouring to convince you of the reality of a passion, which no longer exists; but, as there is no imputation, I could not more easily pardon, than that you have charged me with, (as hypocrisy is, of all vices, most foreign to my too open heart) give me leave to ask you, What end could be proposed from feigning? What were the advantages which could, or did arise from the reality? What other cause in Nature can be assigned for a person, not quite an idiot, naturally prone to strong resentments, enduring the most provoking insolence, and (I hope) unparalleled ill-nature, without even shewing she was sensible of being sacrificed to every gust of vanity, or ill-humour in your temper, or that of any other person, who thought proper to make their court to you, by slighting her?—Too plainly she, for years evinced the truth of Rochefaucault's opinion—"We "forgive, as long as we love."—Deal plainly with me: answer to these truths; if you can refute them, or derive them from any other cause, I will confess,
that

that Fanny, indeed, * “has much imposed upon “herself,” and allow what you have sometimes said, that the natural coquetry of her disposition, with a little flight of romance, by being indulged too far, had wrought upon her mind the semblance of a passion, which existed not in the heart. “How “cruel is reflection after passion? How different “are the points of light on the same objects? “Why is not reason strong enough to keep her “throne, or so entirely vanquished as never to re- “assume it?” I am weary of this continued warfare—

As your sentiments of love and mine were always different, I am pleased to find we, at last, agree in one point,—that, “like the small-pox, it never “attacks us twice;” like that too, where it is violent, the marks last for life; but the best and truest affinity between them, is that, like that, it may be cured. I own it requires violent corrosives; but I am a living instance, that, tho’ the cure is painful, it is possible. According to your idle definition of love, it is plain, I never was possessed of your’s; there is not any thing nouvelle in this discovery; that point has been long clear to me, nor has it been in my power, for a vast while past (tho’ I took great pains) “to impose upon myself” with regard to your sentiments for me. For this reason, I have ever been an earnest advocate for your friendship; and still continue to desire it; which I think the highest compliment I can pay you, as it is the strongest proof of mine.

Captain Wemys is to be married this night to Miss Bermingham; I hear they set out for Danesfort to-morrow; if so, I suppose you’ll be so much engaged, that I shall not see you. If it is inconvenient, I beg you will not stir one step towards me,

* An expression of Henry’s in letter LXXXI.

nor idly fancy, I shall take your absence ill; as you may be perfectly assured that no action, or omission of your future life, can either add to, or take from the calm settled regard I have now, and ever shall retain, for your happiness and welfare. I am (while you continue to desire I should be so, and much longer than you deserve)

Your real friend,
and most obedient servant,

FRANCES.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Dear FANNY,

YOU may see by the badness of my paper, that I have not waited to get home, before I indulged myself in the privilege, you have given me, of writing to you. I am now at ———, where Parson ——— lately lived; and where your friend's brother is now beneficed. This paper is good enough to write sermons on, that, when they are applied to the most general use, there may be but little lost; and perhaps it is the fitter for me too, lest, should I send you better, the messenger might be more worth than the message; tho' by it I, with all sincerity, commend my love to you, corrected, and amended from the errors of the former edition, the *impression* still remaining the same; which, tho' the *type* is small, I still retain, for the fairness and beauty of the *character*.

The gentleman I am now with, is a person I contracted a friendship with, several years ago, upon a certain sympathy I observed between us, in three remarkable particulars: an aversion to matrimony, a splenetick cast of mind, and an unsociable impatience at fools. But, tho' the effects are
equally

equally visible in us both, they are owing to very different causes in each of us. The first proceeds, in him, from an *habitual* disregard to women; (for I can never allow that to be natural to any man :) In me, it proceeds from an apprehension of not meeting success with a woman of merit and fortune; and, to take off the merit of such humility, I make myself amends by the pride of not hazarding a refusal. The second he has from a strong saturnine complexion, which was born with him; but I have contracted that "gloomy habit of soul," from the many mortifications and disappointments I have met with, almost ever since I was born. The third proceeds, in him, as a man of sense, from a strong antipathy he has naturally to such animals, joined to a generous concern, and honest pride, that Providence, who could make such a man as him, should suffer such imperfect essays of human nature to slip unfinished thro' its hands; but I am shocked at fools, perhaps as a person, deformed by nature, or rendered so by disease, may be, at the sight of his own picture on canvass, or in the glass.

You see how occasionally I am led into a description of my own character; which, as it was part of your injunction to me, you may perceive how strong an impression your commands make on my mind; that I am naturally led to obey them, even when I don't particularly intend it; but, when I finish the remainder of your request, I must sit down on deliberate purpose for it; as I despair of meeting any where, save in my own heart, a semblance, good enough, to draw your likeness from.

I now claim your promise, my dear Fanny, of speaking with freedom some things, which you hesitated once or twice about, the few, and very short times, I was in your company, the last time I was
in

in town. I shall be at home by the return of the post.

I am, my dear agreeable girl,
sincerely and affectionately

Your's.

LETTER XC.

I RECEIVED yours from Coolatan and * from Maidenhall. I fell ill of a fore throat the evening I returned to town; but would not be bled, for I hate it. I have not slept these three nights; but no matter. I will excuse you from drawing my character, at present, for I might as well sit for my picture under my present illness. You compliment me with greater strength of mind and constitution than Providence has blest me with, and then reprimand me, when you find me deficient in either. Your words and actions have been always thus far inconsistent, that you never express any fond or flattering opinion of me, except to put your subsequent unkindness or censure in a stronger light.

The swelling in my throat has subsided, and I shall set out for Corke next Monday se'nnight, and shall be well pleased to meet you in Kilkenny the next evening: you know my company, and that they will be glad to see you; but I must not accept of your invitation, for I think you have put it out of my power.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

* This last is lost.

LETTER XCI.

Dear FANNY,

I AM glad to hear you are out of danger, and wish you were as much out of apprehension too. You wrong me—I never was so ill bred, as to charge you with strength of body, or robustness of constitution; but I had always a whim in my head, that the most delicate frame might live in health; which being independent of strong features, or large limbs, there might be health, as well as life in a mussel. My words and actions never did contradict each other, with regard to you; when they appeared to do so, it was, because you mistook either one, or the other; and I suspect your error to be about the last; and for this reason too, that my words proceed from my heart; which, by that heart I swear, is sincerely and affectionately attached to you; but my actions are crossed, or restrained by your's, which are governed by caprice, and a temper bizarre. Your manner with me is extremely whimsical on your part, and dispiriting on mine; and if you knew my natural disposition, and the vast and continued calls I have for every thought and application, I am master of, you'd be convinced of the truth of my attachment to you, when I strive still to hold you, even upon these terms. I beg to hear from you soon, and that you will be neither sick, or cross. What an extravagant passion for change must that woman have, who can be the most agreeable person in the world, and yet for the sake of variety, chuses to be otherwise? As Mrs. Diana says, "You fine ladies affect an undress."

Pray tell me, how I put it out of your power to accept my invitation? Which I again repeat, and never gave one in my life more sincerely.

I am, my dear, little, cross pet,

Your constant, good-humoured, clumsy,
Country Farmer.

When they met at Kilkenny, Frances explained the last paragraph of her letter; that by the indiscretion of shewing her letters in that country, Henry had rendered it imprudent for her to come to his house; however, he prevailed on her to spend a week with his mother and sister, who then lived with him, upon her return from Corke, which she did.

During that happy interval, Henry finding his esteem and affection for her, attaching him stronger than ever in her favour, joined to several reasons that are given in letter CCLXXXIII, formed a sort of vague determination in his mind to marry her; but as he had not resolved with himself on the time, his fortunes being in a very precarious situation, he did not mention any thing of this resolution, while she continued at his house. He behaved with remarkable politeness and punctilio toward her, played back her own Platonicks, and only proceeded thus far, to assure her that he would never marry till he saw her happy, and desired her not to enter into any engagement without his approbation; declaring, in a galant manner, that if she should not meet with any proposal, which he thought might be for her advantage, he would never suffer her to die an old maid, &c.

The following letter was the first she wrote to him after she went up to Dublin.

LETTER XCII.

Dear HARRY,

I AM very ill able to write at all, from the effects of my fatigue; and less able to write to you, than any one. My spirits are so much dissipated, that it is impossible to call them home. I would say much, yet can't say any thing. A continued variation of objects has deprived me of the power of forming ideas, and all the account I can give of myself, at present, is, that the regret I felt, at parting with you, obtrudes itself on the pleasure I receive, from meeting the few that I love, or the still fewer that love me. To sum up all, I am a perfect antithesis——

We met with no accident, but a companion tolerably agreeable in the coach; so with a kind of, *as it were*, we jogged on quietly to Dublin. For my own part, I should have been better pleased to have had the coach to myself; as I might then have given vent to the croud of ideas, which filled my mind; and, by being confined there, have rendered it the seat of anarchy and confusion.

My aunt is in the country at lord B——'s. So far, all is well. I lay last night, and am now in Abby-street; all here are much your's.—You must not expect any kind of entertainment from my letters; you beat me, all to nothing, in compliments, but, I think, I make it up in realities. You were polite enough to say, that I had restored the rational enjoyment of your little Eden to you. I can, with truth affirm, that you have deprived me of the rational enjoyment of my little kingdom: I mean, my mind—at least, you have destroyed, perhaps, the only mark of rationality I had about me—rifi-bility.—I have hardly smiled since we parted. In short, my intellects are much too weak, to bear the feelings

Feelings of my heart—"Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er
 "to part is peace."—But I will have done with
 this subject, lest I should launch again into those
 follies, which, while I am guilty of, I despise.

Adieu, (my once again) dear Harry; remember
 you are now in the situation of Portus, if you think
 your present empire worth preserving, beware of
 tyranny; for there cannot be a second restoration.

I am, and ever wish to continue,

sincerely and affectionately, your's.

LETTER XCIII.

Musæum.—

Chere MIGNONNE,

I AM heartily fatigued with our assizes, where we
 had a great deal of hanging, wrangling, and
 duelling, with other amusements of that kind;
 which, however, was some relief to me, after our
 parting, as the company of fools, or knaves, must,
 for the time, quite exclude any thought of you from
 my mind, and give me less leisure to lament your
 absence. But I am now returned to M. Hall, and,
 by giving up myself intirely to you, may say with
 Gloucester,

"Richard's himself again."

When I walk about my improvements, where you
so short a time, and so long ago, was with me, I re-
 collect, at each different scene, every thing you said
 to me then and there. In the midst of these reflec-
 tions, I often repeat these lines in my favourite ode
 of Boileau,

"Voici les lieux charmants, où mon âme ravi

"Passoit à contempler Silvie,

"Ces tranquilles moments, si doucement perdues!"

What

What I told you, was indeed true, that your presence here had restored me to the rational enjoyment of my rural retreat; I may now say, that your correspondence has given me, (for I would express it strongly) the rational enjoyment of your absence. While you were with me, your sprightly sense, as it were, awakened me from my supine, lethargick life; and I felt my intellects growing strong, like one recovering from a delirium; and your absence may be considered but as a certain distance, at which all beautiful objects are placed, that their proportions may be more distinctly observed, and their symmetry viewed with less confusion.

My sincere compliments to Kitty, and thank her for the postscript on the back of your letter; and, to speak in my stile, as a man of business, if any thing could be an addition to the credit of your bill, it must be her indorsement on it.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER XCIV.

I HEARTILY thank you, dear Harry, for your kind and obliging letter. I rejoice at the conclusion of the tiresome scene, I left you engaged in; and that you are once more returned to your dear little Eden. It is but fair that you should make a kind of local *memory* for me, as *mine* is so much devoted to those moments we spent together, that they alone are present to me, and these, which I now pass, seem but the faint recollection of insipid ideas. My imagination, lively as your own, accompanies you thro' every step, we ever trod together; I walk with you, sit with you, talk to you—
but, oh! there ends the charming reverie! I cannot,

not, dare not venture to make replies for you; accustomed as I have been to that elegant sense, that flows, for ever, from your lips, my understanding will not bear to be "imposed upon, even by my-
" self."

My aunt is still in the country. I have been in the most uncomfortable way that ever was, since I came to town. I have been much out of order with a constant pain in my side, and living, as it were, on the publick, without a home. I have, at last, got lodgings at ———, but, for particular reasons, would have you direct to Abby-street.

It would be impossible to give you an idea of * Mrs. ———'s behaviour to me. She has however done me a real service by it; for, tho' it is not even in her power to prevent my having the sincerest regard for her welfare, she has, in a few days, weaned me from that painful tenderness, which was contracted by years of intimacy, and by which I must have suffered severely at our parting. She set out this morning for Wales; may she there, and every where, meet that happiness, she so much deserves, however hardly she may deal with me — Don't reply to this paragraph, lest I should be tempted to accuse you, as the cause of having lost this still dear and ever valuable friend.

I was a good deal surprized to find by your letter to Kitty, that you did not intend writing to me; Was this well done? — But I will not pretend to "set you tasks;" please yourself in that particular, and you'll please me — for this be assured of, that writing to me cannot be a more disagreeable employment to you, than writing is, at all times, and to all persons, to me. I have made a strange jumble of this writing between you and me; but I will

* She quarrel'd with Frances for venturing to be reconciled to Henry,

give you demonstration, that I don't like it, by concluding (like the story of the bear and fiddle.

P. S. Observe you have mis'd a post.

L E T T E R XCV.

My dear PET,

I AM sorry for what you hint at, about Mrs. ———, and can't help giving a speculation or two upon this head, tho' you have forbidden me; just to give you a little better notion of the world, than you have at present; and in order also to make your mind somewhat easier, with regard to her behaviour to you.

Persons, who set up for advisers, arrogate to themselves perfection; at least a high preference to their pupils; which, with regard to her and you, would be perfection. Now, as most people's pride is superior to their friendship, it is a great humbling of one, to find the fancied superiority not acknowledged, by the counsel not being regarded; and we would rather our friends gained one advantage by our advice, than twenty by taking their own way. Another reflection to be considered, is, that those persons, whom Will. Honeycomb calls the *outrageously* virtuous, notwithstanding their boasted goodness, have at heart a jealous envy against those, whom they suspect to have sense, or spirit enough to enjoy any pleasure; or make advantage of any occurrence of life; which, perhaps, for want of sollicitation, proper circumstance of time, and place, or more generally, for want of courage, they have missed themselves. Observe that I speak all along in general terms; of human nature in general; for Mrs. ——— thinks she has a great deal of friendship for you, and I believe she

has. She may also imagine she would rather lie in Mr. —'s arms, than in the embraces of Apollo; and perhaps she would; there are enthusiasms of all kinds; and yet her behaviour to you may be fairly deduced from one or both of the general reflections, just mentioned, unconscious to herself; for it is not every person, even of the best sense, who acts, that knows from what principle he acts. I could pursue this subject a great deal farther, but shall conclude here, by assuring you sincerely, that you shall for ever find, from my behaviour toward you, that I will endeavour to make you what amends may be in my power, for the loss of a friend, which, perhaps, I was the occasion of. And here pray let me be vain enough to wish you joy, as well as myself, upon the exchange; for both, it seems, you could not have, thro' her niggardliness. Meer downright friendship is like a very moral discourse, which, if continued for any time, is apt to grow lethargick; but love, with friendship mixed, is like a sensible conversation enlivened by sallies of wit, which keeps us awake, during a very long feast. In short, friendship is the enjoyment of men, but love of gods. In the whole heathen mythology, I don't remember an instance of friendship, but every god has his amour; except Vulcan, who being in every thing unlike a god, save immortality, was married; and it is said Venus "has made that god, "subscribe himself, a devil," as he is generally painted with horns. My love to Kitty——

I am, sincerely and affectionately,

Your's,

LETTER XCVI.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I RECEIVED your reflections, moral and entertaining, and must acknowledge that truth dwells in them—they have made me wiser, but not happier; and I much fear, that is all the most refined philosophy can do——

- “ Ah if she lent not arms, as well as rules,
 “ What can she more, than tell us, we are fools?
 “ Teach us to mourn our natures, not to mend,
 “ A sharp accuser, but an helpless friend.”

For my own part, I look upon it as an impossibility that I should ever be happy in love, or friendship; my sentiments are vastly too quick, as well as delicate, to hope for a return.

I thank you for the exchange, you offer me; but as I flattered myself, I was long since possessed of your regard, I am not much pleased to find, it is still to dispose of.——I honestly confess, I never had an equivalent to offer for it, but always looked on it as a valuable present, made in the genteelst manner, by accepting such a trifle, as my esteem, in return, and calling it an exchange.——I am, however, to thank you for the promise you make, and assure you, on my honour, that it is in your power, and your's only, to make ample amends for the loss I have sustained.

My aunt is not come to town: I am still a wanderer. I was fool enough to tell you, in my last letter, that I was alarmed at your missing a post,——but you will make me wise in time.

I fear the *inconstancy* of the weather has removed † Paraclete even from the tottering situation I left it in. I did suspect, a *sudden gust* would carry it away. It was built too *high*, to be at all *permanent*. —all its strength was in the Attic story, the foundation was indeed a *slight* one. —However, since the remembrance, or rather *imagination* of it, is all that now remains; I beg it as a favour, that you will collect the best *plan* you can, from the *ruins*, and send it to me.

I was pleased with a sentiment, I, this morning, met with in the Spectator; and, tho' I am sure there is nothing new in it to you, I will transcribe it, because it leads me to ask a question, I am, perhaps, too solicitous about.—“ We travel thro' “ Time, as thro' a country filled with wild and “ empty wastes, which we would fain hurry over, “ that we may arrive at those several little settle- “ ments, or imaginary points of rest, that are dis- “ persed up and down in it.” You see Addison has agreed with me, “ Time, like space, is marked “ only by its limits” —if you wish, (in the metaphorical sense of the expression) to add length to my days, tell me, when shall we meet?—Like Leonora, you “ can make time long *;” but you can do better, for you can shorten it.

I would apologize for a foolish, inconsistent letter, extremely ill written, but that, I am sure, you have received several from me, every whit as bad, and may, in all probability, do so again — If you can remember Boileau's ode, which you lately quoted, I shall thank you for transcribing it in your next.

Adieu !

FRANCES.

† Henry offered to build a house upon one of his farms, to stile it the Paraclete, and set it with a parcel of land to her aunt.

* The Revenge.

YOUNG.

LETTER. XCVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I HAVE spent my time very ill since I saw you:
I have been reading a collection of letters from Swift, Pope, Gay, Bolingbroke, &c. which have spoiled my relish for writing, by giving me too good a taste for it. However, this humility of mine cannot defend me from being a punctual correspondent; since I have had the assurance to answer your letters constantly; and, as Hudibras says,

“ What is worth in any thing;
“ But so much money as ’twill bring ?”

I may presume that my letters are of inestimable value, while they purchase your’s.

I am more entertained with the private letters of eminent men, than I am with their more public writings; because, in the former case, I fancy I am conversing with them, but in the latter, I only hear of them; for which reason too, I am fonder of biography than of history.

I must tell you a circumstance of my weakness, that I dropt a tear, upon reading the account of Gay’s death, in these letters, tho’ I knew he had been dead above twenty years.

HIATUS.

LETTER. XCVIII.

TELL me, my dear inconsistent Harry, what can be the meaning of your silence? I account for it a thousand different ways, in an hour; but, if I may give credit to your repeated vows, and my

own presaging gloomy soul, I have infinitely more cause to condole with, than complain of you. I wrote to you last Tuesday night, but was ashamed to send you my letter, as the occasion of it was a dream.—You cannot conceive how miserably superstitious it has made me—I have been here these two days, but, though in the court of Comus, joy has been an intire stranger to my heart; which is continually filled with melancholy ideas of my dear Harry's want of health; for sure nothing else could have prevented him from telling me, that he received my last.—Tho' I determined on leaving this to-night, I would not defer inquiring into this mystery, 'till I got (I was going to say) home; but, alas! I have none; lest I should be too late to tell you, that I feel the severest pain, from thinking you are ill, I dare not ask myself, Whether I would not rather it was want of health, than tenderness, that occasioned your neglecting to write.—I know not what I write, from the double fear, and distraction of my thoughts. Mr. ——— sits close by my side, and thinks I am writing to my aunt. How shall I direct my letter? ———The servant waits.—Adieu, my dear Harry; may restoration hang its medicine on my pen, either to your health, or my indifference!

LETTER XCIX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

THE reason you did not, or perhaps may not for the future, hear from me so punctually, as in our former correspondence, is, that I do not receive my letters so regularly now, as formerly; for, in strict obedience to your commands, I have given directions to the post-master, not to give my
 6 letters

letters to any person, but myself, or my order; which occasions some delay, when I am at Belmont, which is a great way from the post town. So it was the indisposition of circumstance, not of my health, which occasioned what I am pleased to hear you call a disappointment. *I wish my Calphurnia would have better dreams*, for I have been, thanks to you, my dear Hygea, in perfect health, since I saw you; as the recovery of your love and favour have fully restored my spirits, which, and health, reciprocally depend upon each other. Nay, I am grown quite gay, and,

“ Since I am crept in favour with myself,

“ I will maintain it, at some little cost.”

I have declared for assemblies here, and am “ your only jig-maker,” to the astonishment of all my acquaintance. I be beau’d myself t’other night, and went to a ball; but soon found out, that it was not the amusement, I was in quest of. The women, for whose sake alone I powdered, talked like children, more in simplicity, than innocence; and were dressed like puppets, more showy than fine. However, this tawdriness, though we may call it poverty confessed, does not offend me so much as, what I have often stiled, a pedantry of dress; which persons of better fortune than taste, are apt to run into. When I see any one dressed very fine, without being genteel; I compare them to a man of learning, without sense; which makes his want of understanding more conspicuous, as the want of taste is more manifest in the other. With such reflections as these, I soon rendered myself unfit for the gay place I was in: so very quickly retired home, with this observation, that the joy, happiness, or pleasure, which elevates our spirits, upon some occasions, does not support us thro’ every scene, where mirth is necessary.

necessary. The gaiety of giddy youth alone can be able to effect this; but, in all rational people, the mirth or chearfulness of most things must flow from the particular pleasure we find in the things themselves. Therefore I shall never again mistake that joyous spirit, which the thoughts of you raises in my heart, for such a lightness of mind, as can make me revel in balls or masquerades; but rather, what makes me more eminently unfit for such amusements.

I am,

My dearest companion,

And most charming correspondent,

Your's in sense and truth,

HENRY.

I send you the odè you desired, as well as I can recollect it.

Voici les lieux charmants, où mon âme ravi:

Passoit à contempler Silvie,

Ces tranquilles moments si doucement perdues!

Que je l'aimois alors, que je la trouvois belle!

Mon cœur, vous soupirez au nom de l'infidelle.

Avez vous oublié que vous ne l'aimez plus?

C'est ici que souvent, parmi ces prairies,

Ma main, des fleurs les plus chers,

Lui faisoit des presens, si tendrement receus!

Que je l'aimois alors, que je la trouvois belle!

Mon cœur, vous soupirez au nom de l'infidelle;

Avez vous oublié que vous ne l'aimez plus?

BOILEAU.

LETTER C.

FRANCES to HENRY.

YOU will, I dare say, be heartily frightened at the enormous size of my packet: but, as it is the privilege of great wits to say much in a little, so it is the custom of small ones to say nothing in a great deal. I have so often illustrated the latter part of this trueism, that it is needless to say more on this little occasion. I must intreat you will be so kind as to forward the inclosed, as soon as you receive it.—I fear, it has already been too long delayed.

I am sincerely glad that you are well, and happy; and shall hereafter say with Cæsar, “We defy augury.”

I have often thought, with you, that the satisfaction, arising from a particular object, or circumstance, is more apt to disqualify us for what the generality of the world call pleasure, than even grief, or pain; as, in the first case, the mind is totally absorbed in one contemplation, without endeavouring to exert its faculties on objects, less pleasing than those which already employ it——In the latter, we are attempting to rouse the mind, and trying to find ease, or pleasure, from every new object, or untried folly that surrounds us. Alas! how vain the effort!

I can, at last, with great pleasure inform you, that I am writing by my own fire-side. I am certain, we should never enjoy the pleasures, or conveniencies of life, did we not sometimes feel the want of them. The unsettled, disagreeable way I have been in, ever since I came to town, has endeared home so much, that, I think, I would rather live in a cottage, where I was mistress of myself, than be a visiter at Versailles.

Need

Need I tell my heart's dear Harry, with what earnestness and sincerity I wish to see him here? You, and you alone, can double every charm I find in the rational enjoyment of myself, and every thing about me.——My aunt is still in the country——Kitty remains in Abby-street: the gaiety of that place is better suited to her chearful disposition, than my retired pleasures; for in *those* views, and *these* only, pleasure can be called my associate——I here release the post-master of Kilkenny, for I would rather my letters should be read by the whole county, than not be punctually answered by you—

May your heart beat time to the gay life you are engaged in; may the women talk sensibly, and dress elegantly; and may every one you meet with, be as perfectly agreeable, as you are to your

Sincerely affectionate

FRANCES.

LETTER CL.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Kilkenny.

I RECEIVED your packet, and sent it off to my sister.

Your manner of accounting for the pleasure we receive from one object, rather disqualifying us for other pleasures, more than even grief, or pain, is very just and very pretty. I found out the truth, from experience; but you did more, by investigating the cause, from reason. This churlish pleasure, though, must be such a one as I receive from you; one, which makes every other appear below my regard. But why do I call it one pleasure,

sure, when it comprehends the best part of the highest pleasures of sense, reason, or reflection; the greatest happiness in this life proceeds from love and friendship; how much more exquisite the joy, when both these are centered in the same object! as one jewel, tho' but equal in size to two others, rises infinitely, in value, above them. Let this be a lesson to those coy fair ones, who suffer a man to break his heart, before they accept on't. One heart-whole lover is worth fifty whining innamorato's.

I am just come from Maldenham, to catch the post going out.

Adieu!

HENRY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R CII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM jealous of you, from your last letter. You say H. G. and J. S. make such a noise in the room, that you cannot attend to what you are writing. I don't care that you should divide yourself between your common acquaintance and me; and am such a churl, that I have no enjoyment either of your conversation, or correspondence, but when I have them entirely to myself,

“Adam relating, the sole auditress,”

when I write to you, my whole soul is yours.

I am not however so selfish, or rather, I am so selfish, as to be willing to communicate your charming-converse to those few, who have a just relish for your wit and sense; for this is but enlarging my own capacity, and increasing my comprehension.

prehension, which is too narrow to enjoy the fullness of the feast.

If I appear to have a better philosophy, or more refined sense than formerly, it is but to accommodate myself to your sentiments and taste; which, by the continuance of your favour, may perhaps strengthen habit into nature. However, in general, I endeavour to appear to you, what I really am in myself; because I cannot be otherwise assured either of your love or esteem. I am certain that, by shewing myself in this light, I may lessen both: but then I secure those portions of each, which I may honestly, or prudently claim. All farther regard is but paid to something foreign from me, and I should be jealous of your attachments even to an imaginary person—Should I pretend to more knowledge, virtue, or philosophy, than I possess, what should I do more, than idly raise sentiments, or affections in you, which I am not able to gratify? and would be a sort of weaning you from your attachments to me, as if a peasant lover should endeavour to inspire his Amaryllis with high notions of pomp, riches, and grandeur.

All the hazard I run, from my free commerce with you, is that, as presumption and self sufficiency are apt to get the start of sense, or knowledge, your praise and approbation may give me such a vanity, as possessed antient heroes with an opinion of their being more than human, but that the charms of your person tempt me often to recollect my manhood. However, the vain apotheosis may still remain, when I reflect, that Gods themselves have been enamoured of mortal women, less amiable than you; who have every perfection of the most eminent of your sex, without their extremes. The philosophy of Portia, without her stoicism; the love of Sappho, without her wantonness; the
wit

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wit of Heloise, without her prophaneness; and the spirit of Cleopatra, without her extravagance.

Write to me, my charming Epitome, -but never when you have any thing else to do.

Adieu!

HENRY.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R C H I I.

I SHOULD have wrote to my dear Harry last post, but was prevented by illness: I am now, thank God, a great deal better, so will not trouble you with an account of my malady.

I am much obliged to you for the romantick gallantry you hint at, in your last; but, in order to make a proper return to so much politeness, I must assure you, tho' I long with the utmost earnestness to see you here, it would rather give me pain than pleasure, to think I was the sole motive of your coming. I do not know, but pride may have a large share in this declaration; for, I confess, I have not humility enough in my disposition, to be pleased with receiving favours.—However, my vanity is much delighted with the compliment; and insists on its remaining, as it is, a very genteel one.

I hope I did not wrong you, with regard to Paraclete; I should indeed be sorry it had a more solid foundation than fancy; as we could, in that way, build as pretty a castle, as any two people I know.

I live tout seul; yet am as happy in mine own dear home, as my health will permit. I am grown quite a domestick animal, and have found out, that the reason we (who pursue) rarely find happiness,

pinels, is, because she is too near us, and "hides
 "behind her ardour to be seen;" for she very
 seldom lives from home.—I expect Kitty will ex-
 change the pleasure I have found in conversing
 with myself, for a much higher, that of conversing
 with her. She is to come to me next week; and
 tho', from being too long immersed in crowds and
 hurry, I have acquired a kind of passion for lone-
 liness, I shall be sincerely glad of her company;
 but I much fear my disposition, which (from the
 long series of disappointments and mortifications I
 have met with) is grown quietly gloomy, will be
 but ill suited to her lively gaiety. However, some-
 say, that contrasts in friendship, like sympathies in
 love, cement the union. I hope it will do so with
 us.—My aunt came to town last night.—I have no
 kind of news to send you, and my spirits are so
 extremely low, that I fear my epistle will be con-
 tagious, and give you the hum-drums, which have,
 at present, taken entire possession of

Your sincere friend

And servant.

A letter is missing here.

L E T T E R. CIV.

Dear HARRY,

I HAVE received both your letters; I did not
 get that of the 19th till Sunday morning; let
 me beg you not to write by the stage again, for I
 hate delays. I wrote to you last Saturday on the
 same subject, I am now to treat of; but, as you
 desire I should be explicit, I obey.

And, first, let me again thank you for your
 designed visit; and again assure you, that, with
 never-ceasing earnestness, I wish, nay long to see
 you here. But as I ever did, and ever shall, pre-
 fer

For your ease and happiness to my own, I must insist on your not contributing to mine, at the expence of yours.

In the most romantick hours of my life, when every instance of tenderness transported me, I well remember to have received more pain than pleasure, from a parallel proof of your regard: and, to deal frankly with you, (which indeed I think you merit) it is neither in my power nor inclination to make the returns, which, I fear, you would expect for such a favour. Let me intreat you then, my dear Harry, not to give yourself and me fruitless trouble; but wait till time, or business, produces some lucky event, which may render your coming necessary to yourself, and of course pleasing to me.

—Whenever that happens, I will, with the utmost pleasure, meet you, at whatever distance you shall appoint from town, with a female companion; provided we can settle it so, as not to interfere with my domestick affairs; and be assured, that every moment of my life, which can be spared from those, shall be bestowed on you. This is indeed no compliment, as I know no other method of spending it, with satisfaction to myself.

I now solemnly declare, that, by declining your intended kindness, I debar myself of the only pleasure I am capable of receiving; for all other enjoyments * “have lost the power to charm my “soul.”—Do not then unkindly construe my regard for your welfare into caprice, or cruelly say, that I don’t desire to see you;—too well, you know, I do.

You do me but strict justice in believing, that the most minute matter, relative to you, must ever be of consequence to me; and, since you have touched on family affairs, you must give me leave

* Letter LXIV. line 10.

to tell you, that I am extremely concerned for poor Nancy. When I was at Maidenhall, I pitied her as much as I ever did any creature; for, tho' I cannot suppose her capable of that exquisite anguish, which more cultivated minds must feel, she could not avoid suffering greatly, from a certainty of Sally's being the reigning favourite: but if the want of an elevated mind prevented her feeling the "Hydra of calamities," in the most poignant manner, it likewise deprived her of the only resource, which can be found for the Forsaken, that of scorning the faithless lover; but she, poor soul! pointed her misplaced rage at her triumphant rival; forgetting the nine hundred and ninety-nine damsels, who must have been dethroned, before she could take possession of the capacious empire of your heart.

I am really sorry her behaviour obliged you to part with her; she was a good servant, and, I believe, sincerely attached to your interest, notwithstanding Mr. ———'s report to the contrary.

I cannot say how much I am obliged by your writing so constantly; let me intreat you will continue to deserve my sincerest thanks, for they are all that I can offer in return. It is not want of gratitude, but power, that prevents my repaying the obligation; you must then, like a compounding creditor, accept all I have to give, tho' it falls ever so short of the debt.

I again intreat you to believe, that I passionately long to see you, and that I am, with the sincerest affection,

Your's, and only your's.

LETTER CV.

My dearest and best-loved Love,

YOUR manner of writing, about my going to Dublin, charms me extremely, as it is very sensible and rational. It flatters me too, as it is somewhat in the stile I have always treated you; for I would never sacrifice one sentiment of friendship to all the extravagance of love; for which reason, to ordinary seeming, I might, perhaps, appear not to have loved you, half so well as I really did. However that be, I solemnly assure you, upon my word of honour, (which, when seriously given, I never forfeited to you yet) that, from the instant I first saw you here, I have loved and approved you better than I ever did before; and such a turn, at this stage of our acquaintance, is very likely to last for life.—*Amen*, so be it!

There is something, however, in your manner, which sometimes perplexes me. As for example, in the two recent instances of Paraclete, and my going to Dublin; you speak of things, which you seem to desire, and, when I think you in earnest, as I generally do, my own inclinations according with your's, you then tell me, you did not seriously intend what you hinted at. But I am not to be trifled with, after this manner; for, whatever I undertake in complaisance to you, I shall certainly go thro' with, in compliance with my own inclinations. So I shall certainly pay my visit to you in Dublin soon, in hope you will return the compliment to Paraclete next summer.

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I hope you rejoice in the same weather we have in the country; we have not had even the whisper
of

of a Michaelmas rig yet; and October, which is generally a fine month, is setting in with all good omens. There is something more charming in a fine season, at this time of the year, than in all the sunshine of a summer's meridian. Methinks it affects us somewhat like the pleasing reverence we feel, when we meet with cheerfulness in the decline of life. I hope this weather will continue 'till I see you. — "Bear me but to her, then fail me if you can." Not that I am such a fair weather spark, that the difference of season shall make any difference in my steadfast purpose to see you, as soon as I can;

"Nor yet the wintry blasts I fear,
 "Nor storms, nor night, shall keep me here."

I am, my dearest,
 Yours till I see you,
 And till I can see you no more.

LETTER CVI.

NEED I tell my dear Harry that his letter gave me the highest pleasure, as the utmost wish my heart e'er formed, was to be approved by him? Let us now mutually congratulate each other, on our coming to a right understanding; for I am persuaded that great part of those uneasinesses, we have both given, and received, have been owing to our not being thoroughly acquainted with the motives on which we separately acted. I may have misconstrued friendship into want of tenderness; and you deemed that caprice, which was excess of love. However, this I am sure of, that we either love one another extremely well, or we must be a couple of the proudest and most obstinate mortals, that ever yet existed. I sincerely hope that our
 mutual

mutual perseverance is owing to the first cause, as is most for the honour of human nature in general, and of us two in particular.

I am sincerely grateful for the kind assurance you give me of still increasing love. If every thought, word, or action of my life, being devoted to you, and you only, can merit a continuance of your regard, I may venture to promise, that it will last for life; and "that our loves and comforts will increase, even as our days do grow."

As to that part of my conduct, which you say perplexes you, it is mighty easily accounted for. I have, perhaps, more romance in my disposition, than any woman, you may have met with; for this reason, my mind is ever filled with ideas out of the common road; whims, which have any degree of tenderness or delicacy, please me extremely, and I am apt to indulge them, perhaps, too much; but, when any circumstance recalls the remembrance of my situation in life, I am immediately sorry for having given way to my folly, and would retrieve it, if I could. But, not to appear more variable than I really am; I submit the being, or annihilation of Paraclete, intirely to you. If you seriously think, that my aunt's living there will add to your happiness, and not hurt my fame, I will again, with transport, indulge my heart with

"Those scenes of bliss my raptur'd fancy fram'd,
 "In that dear spot, with peace and thee retir'd;
 "Tho' reason then my sanguine fondness blam'd,
 "I still adhere to what my love inspir'd.—

I insist on your answering me like the man of honour, and the friend, the lover must not have the smallest part in the reply.

I do indeed rejoice with you, and for you, on account of the weather. I never see a gleam of sunshine, or a clear sky, that does not afford me a

double pleasure, by reflecting, how much you enjoy it. I would recommend it to you, to stay in the country, while the weather holds good; assured of this, that when Sol draws his influence, and refuses longer to cheer us miserable mortals, you can more than supply his absence, by clearing those glooms, which even his cheerful rays cannot dispel without you.

I have such a violent pain in my right shoulder, that it is with the utmost difficulty I move my hand to write. I am still *une pauvre solitaire*; Kitty has not yet left Abby-street, nor do I know when she will.

If I were able, I would write another letter, and not send this; for it is indeed a miserable scrawl; tho', as my letters have been always originals, not copies, I think it would be ill-timed to begin with forms, when I should leave them off.

As to the affair of Nancy and Sally, it is of no farther consequence to me, than if James and the coachman had been the disputants. Nor did I mention my opinion of Sally with any design; for you may easily conceive, that it is a matter of indifference to me, whether your present favourite was christened Sarah, or Anne;—for, while I am in possession of the jewel that is lodged within, I care not who holds the casket.

“ Oh! free, for ever, be his eye,

“ Whose heart to me is always true!”

I have quoted these lines to you before, upon some such occasion.

Adieu! my dear Harry, and believe me, as I am, faithfully and affectionately,

Your's,

LETTER CVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

YOU have distinguished very justly about the disadvantages, under which my friendship and your love have hitherto appeared to each other; but they have both approved themselves of the best and most lasting kind, upon the tests I have often mentioned to you, that I should always preserve the same constant tenor in my behaviour toward you, behaved you to me well or ill;

“ True as the dial to the sun,

“ Altho’ it be not shin’d upon;”

and that, if you once truly loved me, whatever might happen in the course of our lives, might, perhaps, interrupt, but could never break the chain. Yet, to say the truth, these convertible or reciprocal terms of love and friendship have been so often commuted, and compounded between us, that they are now become, according to a Latin sentence I have, *unde nescio*, met with,

“ Utrum horum mavis accipe, sive utrumque;”

and between us two have come to so near a resemblance to each other, that my friendship, from a constant unallayed heat, begins now to blaze into a flame; and the extravagance of your passion seems to have spent itself to

“ The calm lights of mild philosophy;”

And here I must impose another Latin sentence upon you, from Ovid:

“ Quod nunc ratio est, impetus ante fuit.”

Your saying, that you rejoice now in fine weather (tho’ all seasons are equal to those who live in

town) because you know the pleasure I receive from it, in the country, puts me in mind of a pair of romantic lovers, who agreed, at parting, that, at such an hour of the night, they would each take a solitary walk by moonlight, enjoying a whimsical kind of happiness, in that they were both employed in contemplating the same object, at the same time. Such instances as these, to persons who never were in love, may, perhaps, appear very ridiculous; but the charming caprices of this delightful passion, like the taste, which men of a refined genius have for the politer arts and sciences, are as incomprehensible to persons of an ordinary capacity, as the objects of a sixth sense.

My lovely, loving, and beloved Fair One,

Farewel.

HENRY.

LETTER CVIII.

Dear HARRY,

I HAVE entered upon the study you prescribed to me, and have read Tully's *Offices* almost thro'; and I profess myself both pleased and surprized, at finding to what a noble height of virtuous sentiment an unlightened Pagan has carried the point of morals, truth, and justice. There are some extreme nice cases put, in dealing between man and man; in which Cicero has determined so differently from the general practice, and allowed opinions of the mercantile world, that a person must have a very refined and abstracted speculation, who will readily join issue with his reasonings.

I see now, more than ever, the disadvantage in morals, which people must labour under, who have not had the happiness of a liberal and academic edu-

education; who have not secured a thorough knowledge of books, before they venture upon any acquaintance, or commerce with the world. For it is in early youth, before ideas are crowded, or complexed, while the fancy is lively, quick to receive, and amorous to retain, the delicate sensations, that the moral beauty of abstract virtue can be able to impress its image on the mind; and you might as well attempt to give a man of thirty a taste for the nice and inexpressible graces of poetry, painting, or music, as to teach a merchant a relish for the refinements of Cicero.

However, I must confess, that the more I am pleased with this author; and others of the same heathen class, the more alarmed I find myself on account of the Christian religion; which, tho' allowed to be the finest and noblest system of ethics that ever was framed, I really can't perceive any thing more in, than was said, wrote, and practised, before the Augustan period. I have often heard hints of the same kind upon this subject in conversation, but they never made the least impression on me before, because they never came from any person, whom I did not observe to be deficient either in sense or virtue. Now, do not imagine, from any thing I say, that I am, in the least staggered with regard to my faith in our holy religion; but, as we should, upon all occasions, be ready to give an account of the faith that is in us, I shall be obliged, if you will take the trouble, to render me the reason, or necessity, for that revelation; which, without ever having inquired about, I most steadfastly and implicitly believe in. Your hours of retirement and leisure have not been unemployed upon these subjects; and you are my Abelard, my only orthodox—in speculative points.

LETTER CIX.

My dear HELOISE,

I RECEIVED your clever letter upon those subjects, which I left you conversant about; and, tho' I have already given you every book from my study, which I presumed might adorn a lady's library, I believe, I shall soon be obliged to thin my shelves farther, and call in aid from the Cotton Museum to supply you

Your criticism upon taste is fine, and puts me in mind of a very judicious remark, I have somewhere met with, upon Julius Scaliger; who was allowed to be a man of great learning, and deep erudition, but is observed to be but an heavy commentator upon the inimitable elegancies of classics; "for that he applied himself to his studies, somewhat too late in life." There are in moral virtue certain graces, which it is not in the power of ethic rules to prescribe, analagous to the *je ne-sçay-quoi* of natural beauty, which the most descriptive poetry cannot express; and which a person can be only capable of perceiving, from a sort of sympathy of soul; as refined spirits are supposed to communicate their ideas, rather by intuition than converse.

Your expression of *amorous to retain* is fine; and one instance, among many in your writings, of that poetical elegance, which you allude to.

I am not prepared to enter into a treatise upon the subject you have started; but shall throw together a few unconnected hints, after the manner of a common-place book, which is the only way I can have patience to write in.

Religion may be considered but as moral virtue, reduced to method; as human laws are but a compendium of equity. Moral virtue, its truth and beauty, like the rays of the sun, are too weak and
diffuse

diffuse for many, the best purposes of life ; but religion, like a burning-glass, collects those scattered rays, giving them united force, and more particular direction.

From the light of Nature a few ingenious philosophers might have deduced, perhaps, the whole of revealed ethics ; but their writings could have a slight and confined influence over the generality of mankind. Reasoning may convince our minds, but human nature requires authority to govern and controul its actions. Rewards and punishments are not clear from the light of Nature, tho' they may be presumed from the analogy running thro' all the works of Providence. The time, at least, could not be ascertained, 'till revelation denounced it to be immediately consequent of our death ; so that, before that revelation, men might, perhaps, presume upon the possibility of some farther state of probation. Nay, what certainty of an hereafter, upon any terms, could we have, without revelation ?

One great comfort, in this frail mortal life, was wanting from the reasonings of natural religion, which the Christian system has assured us of, namely, remission upon repentance ; and this has not only informed us of one darling attribute more in the Godhead, but has saved sinners from the misery and danger of despair.

Why the great God has thought proper to make his revelations so partially, both with regard to time and place, in such and such a manner ; the mystery of the incarnation, the passion, with other articles of faith, are too abstruse to enter into here : Besides, they more properly belong to, what they call, systematical divinity ; and I shall let them rest, 'till I am at leisure to recommend proper books for your reading, to instruct you in such speculative subjects. So having sufficiently answered as much of

this matter, as your letter required, I shall only add this short prayer, "That we may both live in hope, that we may die in certainty!"

Adieu !

LETTER CX.

My dear CONFESSOR,

I RECEIVED your's, but it has not answered my expectations, tho' you say it has answered my letter. Now I forget how fully I expressed myself there, but I know I had more in contemplation, when I wrote, than you have taken notice of; and pray observe, there is a great difference between answering a question, and solving a difficulty.

I remember La Bruyere gives the character of a famous French wit, who made it a rule with himself, never to seem posed, upon any occasion whatsoever; and being asked, a little abruptly, once, What was the difference between Dryads and Hamadryads, answered very readily, "You have heard of your bishops and archbishops."

I had this story from yourself some time ago, upon somewhat a similar occasion, and I must therefore confess the pertness of my re-application; and, by way of apology for it, I shall add the old proverb, That a fool may ask more questions, than a wise man can answer. However, I acknowledge, that you have said enough to loosen the difficulty, tho' not intirely to resolve it; and, for the rest, I am satisfied to throw myself upon faith.

Adieu !

FRANCES.

L E T T E R CXI.

Dear FANNY,

I HAVE read Tom Jones at your request, and return it to you with my opinion upon it ; which you likewise require.

The novel is a true copy of human life ; the characters thoroughly kept up to ; the story well told ; the incidents humorous ; the sentiments noble ; and the reflections just and moral.

The only fault I find with the author is, the ill-judged attempts he often makes to be witty ; which being by no means his talent, and, in a work of this kind, wholly unnecessary ; he is therefore inexcusable, if it should turn out, as it frequently does here, in poor allusions, bald conceits, or wretched puns.

Adieu !

H E N R Y.

L E T T E R CXII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

MY not hearing from you these two posts, shall be no reason for my not writing to you ; for I do it for the pleasure I have in addressing you, after any manner, not because I think myself under a necessity of answering you.

You may remember the Spectators were in my course of reading, while you was here ; and t'other day I met a paper of Addison's, the 2d paper of the 4th volume, which supports my justification of Pope, against your censure : " That there were but few lines, in his works, his own." Part of his

Preface to his own works too may be taken in:
 "Every one, who reads, expects their authors
 "should be scholars, and yet are angry when they
 "find them so." Is not your action your own, be-
 cause it is as just and graceful as lady ——'s?

I have sometimes observed to you, the great in-
 conveniencies of a good memory, which persons of
 the best understandings, or greatest reading, are
 seldom incumbered with; by which means, what-
 ever they read becomes their own; by improving
 their minds, without burthening their memories;
 and like persons, who have studied mathematics, be-
 ing once convinced of a demonstration, ever after
 retain the truth, tho' the A's and B's which ex-
 plained it to them, are forgot. There is something
 analagous to digestion in learning.—One person
 shall turn all he eats, and drinks, to sound flesh, and
 florid complexion; while another person, of a dis-
 ordered or weakly constitution, shall quote you a
 piece of partridge, or pheasant, after every meal.

I beg to hear from you as soon as possible, for I
 am afraid, the delay is owing to the pain in your
 arm, you mentioned in one of your letters.

Your constant and affectionate

HENRY.

LETTER CXIII.

I THINK myself vastly obliged to dear Harry
 for his obliging voluntier. I wish it was in my
 power to make him a better return, than meer
 thanks; but indeed that is all I have to offer, for I
 am absolutely grown so intolerably stupid, and have
 such a confirmed aversion to writing, that I hate
 the thoughts of touching a pen; conscious, that it
 must be as tiresome to you to read, as it is to me
 to

to write. Let my want of power plead my excuse, and kindly accept of the will for the deed.

I have not had leisure enough, since I received your's, to look for the paper you mentioned. You mistake my opinion with regard to Pope. I did not say, his verse was not his own, but that he was only a versifier; and, as his thoughts and expressions are, I think, more elegant than any of our British poets, I cannot help being sorry, that he did not strike out something of his own, and not intirely confine his genius to translating, or versifying the plans marked out by other men; for this reason, I think he had less merit, tho' more charms, than many of our English writers; as the masons, who built Maidenhall, had, in my mind, no more pretence to taste, or elegance, than if they had built a barn.

“ For, when some lofty pile is rais'd,
 “ We never hear the workmen prais'd
 “ Who bring the lime, or place the stones;
 “ But all admire Inigo Jones.”

Had I ever seen lady ———, it is certain, I should have endeavoured to copy her. I am glad I did not, for I don't know that I ever yet saw a good imitation; for what may be elegantly graceful in one person, may appear ridiculously awkward in another.

Your remark with regard to memory is verified in me, for I know no one that has a better than myself; and it is indeed very often a great incumbrance to me, in more cases than one.

Mrs. ——— has been very well received by her father-in-law in Wales, and is *all so happy*. I sincerely rejoice at it, tho' indeed she does not deserve I should give myself a moment's thought about her. She has wrote several letters to Kitty, and others; not a line to me. I am sorry to say, she has de-

scended to little meannesses, I thought her incapable of; particularly, that of divulging every passage relative to you, herself, and me, with *Notes Variorum*——on the folly of my being again reconciled to you, and many dreadful prophecies on the consequence——I hope, she will not prove a * Cassandra.

I told you, in my last letter, how my time was employ'd. I have not been any where from home, but at the Park, this fortnight. The pain in my arm, which you are so kind as to think of, turned out to be the rheumatism. I was much worse after I wrote to you; but, by the help of patience and warmth (without flannel, which I hate) I am now pretty well.

I am surprized at your mentioning any delay on my side: I have answered every one of your letters, by the next post; if you have not got them, there must be some blunder at your post office. You are extremely kind, not to stand on form: you can never write out of time; I may. Your letters always give me pleasure; mine cannot afford you any, yet are, at this time, a higher compliment, than when they were, perhaps, more entertaining. I hate writing, because I know I cannot write: however, I would not have you imagine, that I think this self-mortification too high a price for your correspondence; I am only concerned, that I have not an equivalent return to make. But this be assured of, that what I want in expression, is made up in friendship and affection for you. Let my actions supply the place of words, and prove me.

Ever Your's.

* A prophetess, whose fate it was never to be believed, till the prediction was verified by the event.

LETTER CXIV.

I RECEIVED a letter from you, pleading your incapacity of writing, in the same stile that Jeremy is said to exclaim against wit in Love for Love; which is our comedy also: But you must get somebody else, indeed almost any body else, to make your apology on that head, for you can't avoid betraying yourself in your defence. In short, my charming girl, you can never hope to be excused on this subject; for nothing but your writing ill shall make me forgive your neglect.

I am sorry for Mrs. ———'s behaviour to you, but am pleased to find you mention it as becomes you, more in concern, than picque; which truly shews in you more generosity and virtue, than she was ever capable of. There is, in her censures of you, a vast air of the old maid; and tho' poor Mr. ———, for his sins, has rid her of that reproach, yet the terrible apprehensions she some time laboured under of that forlorn state, have so soured her morals, that she wants nothing—but wit—to be an excellent satirist. The little meannesses, she has been guilty of, in mentioning your name, convince me of the truth of my remarks about her, in a late letter; for her behaviour really shews more picque for herself, than friendly concern for you. But—fare-her-well—for a * Pseudo Maga!

Notwithstanding what you say against poor Pope, I am very well satisfied, he has said many things of his own; nay, many things are his own, tho' they, perhaps, were said before.

I shall, by the end of this week, have finished the earliest and largest sowing of any man in this country. Sixty-three acres of corn, exactly one third of my demesne, unploughed when you was here, and

* False prophets,

all]

all limed, at eighty barrels to an acre. After so much labour and fatigue, I think I owe myself some relaxation, and shall then post up to Dublin, to see what harvest you are making there; which I shall share with you, in order to provoke you to make reprisals on mine here next summer. I am, my dearest,

Ever your's

HENRY.

LETTER CXV.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I AM in haste to dispatch my little voluntier, before the post comes in, lest your letter should not leave me room to say any thing of my own; for your writings are generally so replete with matter and sentiment, that it takes me up the full extent of a letter merely to answer your's; so that there is hardly a thought, or expression, I can truly call my own, except when I subscribe myself, "Your lover, and your friend;" for that is a sentiment which proceeds so naturally from my heart, that it would frequently occur, whether you had wrote to me or no.

I am well aware, how far short these detached essays will appear of the papers of our regular correspondence; for this remarkable reason, that, as natural philosophers affirm the statue to be originally in the stone, the hammer and chissel only clearing off the rubbish; so speculative wits say, that all arts and sciences are innate in the mind; and that an ingenious querist may deduce the most abstruse theorems of mathematics, philosophy, or ethics, from the answers of a rational respondent, tho' ever so illiterate. Our epistolary converse, I look upon,

in

in this *Socratical* light; inasmuch that, if I say any thing, which deserves to be taken notice of, I may rather be said to have the happiness to be inspired, than to boast the merit of wit. I have, several times, since we founded the Amourette, or Paraclete, lamented that at your poetical baptism, you had not taken upon you *Le Nom d'Amour* of * *Heloise*; but, upon reflection, I think it better became that person, who was lately stiled so, as she indeed needed many things to learn; but

“ You strike each point with native force of mind

“ While puzzled learning labours far behind;”

and are fitter to be yourself the preceptor, than the pupil. For my part, I acknowledge to have been taught several things by you; but the most material, and what pleases me most, is that you have brought me to suspect, that I never loved before. I have reason to think now, that I formerly mistook a high fever, for that noble passion; and, not being sensible of those heart-burnings, and quick pulses toward you, which I had formerly felt for another, I ingenuously confessed, that the love, which makes such a bustle in romances, was quite extinct in me. However, tho' I might have felt the *passion*, I think I never did the *sentiment* before; for your charms

“ Inspire, not lust, but elegant desire;”

and are the exact reverse of Sidley's art, as they are capable of imparting “ the chastest wishes to “ the loosest heart;” and, as Milton expresses it, in refining upon sensual pleasure, can raise the “ very *spirit* of love, and amorous delight.”—— All my family have been this fortnight at Newtown,

* This was the romantick name that the person mentioned in the last letter had assumed.

attend-

attending my sister's happy minute, which is not yet arrived; and I have passed my time here, after a manner I like best, when I can't spend it with you. I rise at day-break, perform the † Ambarvalia, and divide the whole day-light between my ploughs and the planting of my trees; never dine 'till night; then come in hungry, cold, and tired, to a good fire, a mutton chop, a pint of wine, a pinch of snuff, and a book. How often, and how sincerely, have I wished for you, in this retirement? And what an age it appears to me since I saw you last! Which makes me suspect that Mr. Locke's assertion is not just; for, if Time is measured but by the succession of ideas, how can your absence appear tedious to me, who have thought of nothing else but you? There is something, however, in this disparted state, which is not altogether unpleasant; and shews the infinite goodness of Providence, and the happiness of a mind properly turned, that there are satisfactions and emoluments, even in the misfortunes and distresses of human life; and that we may, as Young expresses it,

“Elaborate an artificial happiness from pains.”

And it is really my opinion, upon a good deal of reflection, that no person was ever possessed of sublime sense or virtue, who was incapable of melancholy pleasures. The presence of those we love is like the noon; their absence, like the even of life; which latter has, I believe, a good deal of that sort of pleasure I have just mentioned.

I am, as I told you once before in this letter, both
Your lover and your friend,

HENRY.

† See the note on Letter XLVII.

LETTER CXVI.
FRANCES to HENRY.

NOTHING less than the extreme pleasure I received from your last dear, elegant epistle, could possibly have roused me from the lethargic stupidity I have been lately immersed in: "As after winds of ruffling wing, the sea, subsiding slow, settles into a calm." But, as I have already said, it was such a one, as I by no means can boast of; for it was from passion being exhausted, not the power of reason, this apathy arose. But thy much-loved, thy dear, kind, forming hand, "to healthful measure has reduced and tempered the rage of pride, the feltness of revenge, and all the weak excesses of my heart."

Oh! what a charm has flattery, when it proceeds from those we truly love! how far beyond expression is the pleasure I receive from your saying, I am what I most wish to be? for, though I am not vain enough to fancy I have the least pretence to those praises you lavish on me, yet, as every eye creates its own charmer, your kind partiality may, perhaps, set my little merit in such an advantageous light, as may render me pleasing to the single person, whose approbation is of more consequence to me, than that of the united world.

With regard to myself, I must differ from the opinion you advance, that "the statue is originally in the stone;" for I am thoroughly conscious, that I am more indebted to you for any amiable quality, which I may possess, than to nature. Perhaps the first sparks were formed by nature, but they lay as dead as fire in flint, which can only be extracted by steel.—What you have made, accept of: I am indeed a creature of your own forming, and therefore all your own.—But, oh! my

my dearest Harry, remember that, as you have raised the sensations of my mind to know the highest happiness the human heart can feel, you have also rendered me capable of such pains, as would "make hell superfluous."

That you do love me, I verily believe; and the fond hope, that you will ever do so, is all the hold I have of happiness. The charming change, you speak of in your sentiments, has transported me almost beyond my senses. To have you love me with tenderness and delicacy, all gross desires for ever banished from your heart, is joy unspeakable.—Now, and now only, I begin to live, and you to love.

How earnestly, how passionately, do I languish to be a partner in the rational delight you mention! to have the essence of wisdom, learning, eloquence, and truth, from thy harmonious tongue, 'till, raised by gratitude and rapture, I catch my kind instructor in my arms, and teach him even what it is to love!—Oh! Harry, why has not fortune placed me in a sphere to indulge my first, my last, my only wish, of being always and for ever your's? From the extremity of joy, my heart is plunged in the severest grief, when I reflect that a few, * a very few months will divide us, perhaps for ever! oh! I cannot bear the thought.—You will forget me then—no more remember that you once did love me, or that I ever did, and ever shall love you.—My heart is torn in pieces with this thought, I'll not indulge it.

As I am always pleased at your being engaged in any pursuit that can be either useful or delightful to you, I am charmed with your passion for Planting. I think it is Addison, who says, "There

* She was then going for England with her aunt, to settle for life.

“ is something truly magnificent in this kind of
 “ amusement ; it gives a noble air to several parts
 “ of nature ; it fills the earth with a variety of
 “ beautiful scenes, and has something in it like
 “ creation ; for this reason, the pleasure of one
 “ who plants is like that of a poet, who is more
 “ delighted with his own productions than any
 “ other writer or artist whatsoever.”

I hope you'll pardon my quotation, as it is only meant to prove, that the whole study of my life (“ true as the needle to the pole”) tends to you only ; for I am well assured this passage would have passed “ unmarked, by my unheeding eye,” had you not been engaged in this noble avocation.— In short, I never take up a book but with a design of rendering myself more worthy of your personal or epistolary converse. I am well convinced, that not all the authors I can ever read, will prevent my falling short of that *ne plus ultra*. It is from you, and you alone, my dear preceptor, I must receive both inspiration and expression. —

“ From lips like your's, what precepts fail to move ?
 “ Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love.”

I will with great pleasure adopt the name of Heloise, provided you reassume that of Abelard ; she who lately had it might have a more intelligent mind, but not one so well calculated to be your pupil, as I am ; for she wanted both love and respect for her tutor.

I have thought every day increased in length, since you talked of coming to town ; had I nothing to hope or fear, it is highly probable, I should have discovered every day is shorter, than the day before ; but, the nearer we approach to the summit of our wishes, the intervening space grows more tedious, by recollection of the past fatigue.

Adieu !

FRANCES.

LETTER CXVII.

My dear ELOISE,

IF I had no other of the many reasons I have to write to you, this one would be sufficient, that I observe, my letters have a good effect upon your spirits; which gives me greater pleasure, and pride, than would the applause of the world, were I sure of gaining it, by printing them.

The quotation, you sent me on Planting, is indeed from Addison, in one of his Spectators; for who can be in doubt, upon any passage wrote by him? what an infinite difference there is between his papers, and any of the rest, bound up with them! what a nobleness of sentiment, justness of thought, perspicuity of stile, elegance of expression, and propriety of language there is in all his writings! they say, prudent oeconomists should lay by something always out of their annual income, to avail themselves of, upon any natural or accidental emergency. So I have marked several of Addison's papers, to be referred to, on any extraordinary distress, or misfortune of life; against pain, sickness, old age, poverty, the hour of death, and the day of judgment. In short, meer man is not able to support his spirit, under any of these pressures; and the writings of several eminent men are admirable resources to strengthen philosophy, for the present, and enliven hope, for the future; and a collection of pieces, from several authors, in this stile, which may not improperly be intitled, "The cordial of adversity," would be a very useful work on many occasions in life.

I am carrying on my plantations with as much diligence, but not with the same spirit, as before: I was then in hopes of seeing you here, and now I almost despair of that pleasure; the genius of the place

place is dead, — for what inspiration can I expect from hidebound Hamadryads, when the Diana of the woods is gone.

Fear not, my dearest girl, that either distance of place, or time, shall ever make me forget to love you; for it was ever my greatest pleasure, and shall be always my highest pride, to acknowledge myself your lover, and your friend.

ABELARD.

A letter is missing here.

LETTER CXVIII.

Dearest FANNY,

I RECEIVED a low-spirited letter from you last post, which I am sorry for, and surprized at; for I think it is a condescension beneath your pride, and giving a triumph to a base enemy, whose malice would be impotent, if you would exert the spirit you have, with any other person's temper. But of these matters more at meeting. — I shall only infer an observation I have often made, which this subject makes occur to me now, that a man must be qualified by nature for every thing, the greatest, and even the most insignificant. Without this natural endowment, power will turn to tyranny, learning to pedantry; nay, should a man even pretend to dress, without a genius, he can but accomplish himself a fop.

There is something insolent in that fellow's manners, which plainly proves he was never designed for government. When a person of such mean, original, and worthless qualities, rises to any rule, or power, he may be compared, in a witty phrase
of

of Doctor South's, to a scum; at once the dalest and the uppermost part.

Every happiness on this earth attend

My dearest girl!

LETTER CXIX.

I HOPE my having been extremely harrassed with business, for this week past, will appear a sufficient excuse to dear Harry, for my not writing last post. I own the reproof in your's of the 23^d both just and gentle; but I think nature is in fault, not I: for I would not let the present vexation, or any other, chagrine me, if I could help it;—but I will have done with the subject, lest I should again demonstrate, that it is in the power of trifles to make me uneasy.

Your letters can indeed lower, or raise my spirits, as you please: for I consider myself but as an instrument, in the hands of a skilful musician, who can “sound me from my lowest note, to the top of my compass.”

I think your system of preparation against the numberless disagreeable occurrences of life, a very good one; but then, believe me, it will only avail you in the ordinary accidents, which are common to all men. For where a mind, like your's, meets with any uncommon misfortune, it is not turning to authors, that we know wrote well, will afford us consolation. Such an understanding as your's must suggest to itself, whatever has been said on a parallel occasion. But alas! how incapable is wisdom of alleviating those distresses which affect the heart! Mr. Addison has said, “there is no consolation for unhappy love: a fine understanding, and an elegant taste, add strength to the passion, while that, of all others, most
“enervates

"enervates them."——For my own part, I know not where to apply myself for courage, or constancy, to support what I think infinitely more terrible than death. If your study, or philosophy, has found out a method of parting from all we love, without a pang, it will be but charity to let me know it; and tho' it may not, perhaps, work so perfect a cure on me as you; if it does but alleviate any part of the pain, it will be of infinite service to me. The parting of the soul and body, tho' a circumstance that we are from our infancy inured to think of, has shook the courage of the greatest men——How much more dreadful is it to be for ever separated from what we value much above ourselves?——but, since it must be, I will endeavour to summon all my fortitude, and learn from you, to bear it as I ought; for, * "in sight of such a pattern, to persist, ill suits a person honoured with thy love."——The only return I can make to the kind assurance you give me, is to make you the same promise; which, I believe, you will not doubt; for,

"Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,

" 'Tis sure the hardest science to forget."

Adieu, my dear Abelard, may you remember me, while the remembrance is grateful; and, when it ceases to be so, forget

Your

ELOISE.

* YOUNG's Revenge.

Here a letter is missing.

L E T T E R. CXX.

My dearest HARRY,

OUR journey is fixed, and I am distracted: I know the prudence of the scheme in every point, and yet nothing but necessity should make me stir. I long to see you, and yet wish it not: for, tho' I were to see you every day and hour, I shall never be able to forget, but for a minute, that I must leave Ireland in May, with a moral certainty of never seeing it again. Had not fortune, as it were, rooted you to a peculiar spot, what I now look upon as the severest kind of banishment, could give me but little pain, for we are all citizens of the world.——As to my loss, you will not, cannot feel it; for, in reality it is none; and it is as much impossible that you can ever want a more charming, agreeable friend, as that you can ever find a sincerer.——Soon, very soon, you will forget me; while I, alas! “a helpless stranger in a foreign land,” shall neither wish, nor hope for consolation; for where, or how, or from whom should I receive it?

All that remains, after our last adieu, is to consider you as an inhabitant of another world, and myself in a local purgatory; where having proved my faith and constancy, we shall be re-united, again shall meet, to part no more;——tho' there can be no certainty that we shall know one another in a future state, I think it is extremely consistent with human reason, to suppose we shall; for I think it is arraigning the wisdom of the Almighty, to imagine that he should form us with passions, and attractions for each other, (which more frequently produce misery, than happiness, in this life)

life) and let those strongest, noblest faculties of the soul perish with the body in the grave. No—it cannot be; they were ordained to answer higher ends, to make the everlasting happiness of his creatures, and will exist to all eternity. Besides, we are taught to believe, that we must render an account of our past lives. Sure, “Love is the “informing, active fire, that kindles up the mass;” and is it not the highest absurdity to suppose, that, when in a state of perfection, we shall remember the effects, but forget the cause?—I would not lose this hope, for any certainty the world could give me.—Oh! my best-loved, my ever dear, and charming friend, part when we will, we have an eternity to spend together! and, tho’ I do not flatter myself with holding the first, or highest place in your regard, I dare boast of as sincere, as tender, and as constant an affection for you, as ever “faithful woman felt, or false one feigned;” and there, where all the mists of error shall be cleared away, “our forms transparent, naked “every thought,” a passion, such as mine, must have some claim.

As to what you mention with regard to form, give me leave to assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, were *your’s* equal to your utmost wish, it should not make any alteration in *mine*, without altering my condition also: in the mean time, I love you much too well, (were it in my power) to buy my happiness at the price of your’s; and whatever idea you may have formed of my sentiments for you, I swear by that all-seeing power, who knows my inmost thoughts, that fortune never had the smallest share in my unchangeable affection for you; and, could you seat me on a throne this moment, it might add to my gratitude, but could not to my love. The sole concern, I have ever had about your fortune, with

regard to myself, was, that it not being as easy as you could wish, might perhaps engage you to enter into a situation, which must render my affection for you criminal. This, I own, has often filled my heart with sorrow, and my eyes with tears; as the constant result of this thought was a fixed resolution never to see you more. But, when I have considered it would be for your happiness, I quickly found, I could give up my own.—All reflections of this kind are now over, and, since the long-feared, fatal separation must arrive, I think I could, without betraying any weakness, hear you were married to a deserving woman, with a good fortune. For, since it is not in my power to make you happy, all that remains, is, with sincerity and truth, to wish you so.

I long impatiently to see you, yet would, by no means, have you come, till it suits your own convenience. I have ten thousand things to say to you; “for I could find out things to talk to thee for ever; we ought to summon all the spirit of soft passion up, to cheer our hearts, thus labouring with the pangs of parting.”

Pray let me know, in your next, when you really think of coming to town? I look on every minute, that we might, and do not spend together, as an irreparable loss; for, oh! they are but few, compared to the numberless hours we must pass asunder.

Adieu, my dearest Harry! forgive my weakness, as it is you who cause it; and rest assured, that no time, or chance, shall ever change the unalterable affection of

Your

ELOISE.

LETTER CXXI.

My dear FANNY,

Waterford.

I AM come hither in quest of vote and interest, but return to-morrow. Wednesday next I set out from Maidenhall, and Friday from Belmont, for Dublin. I shall pass round thro' the country of Wicklow, so what day I shall be in town, I can better let you know from some stage on the road.

I can hardly express what an impatience I have to return to the country, tho' I have been but two days from it, upon business too which I like, the serving of a friend, and in a very agreeable town too. In short, I find that all the spirit of ambition and active life is quite extinguished in me; and supplanted by the tranquil pleasures and speculative leisure of rural retirement; heedless how little my sentiments or actions, shine forth before the busy world, so you and I approve. In this philosophick heroism, I think I exceed Cincinnatus, and some other of the gallant personages of antiquity; they indeed returned to the plough, but I would not leave it. This turn of mind, which I have had for some time, has staggered my faith, with regard to the change occasioned in the nature of things, on account of original sin: particularly, that tillage and agriculture became then necessary to obtain the fruits of the earth, which used to grow spontaneously before. Now I am sufficiently orthodox in sound doctrine, tho' I have not a leprosy of faith about me; and, if this moral exercise, both of body and mind, was meant as a curse, how comes it to be attended with so much rational and philosophick pleasure? If the mind of man was changed, at the same time, so as to accommodate itself to this employment, what is become of the curse? there is such a natural sense

of these pleasures implanted in our souls, that we are struck with them, at first sight, we know not how; we feel a vague kind of admiration, we know not why; and are sensible of a certain earnestness of affection, we know not for what; not unlike the first longings of a maid. How high then must this natural pleasure be, when it becomes a rational one also! when we are able to contemplate the beauties of the creation in a philosophick light, to explore the admirable contrivance of Providence, and investigate the hidden causes of all natural effects!——But I am going too far, and detaining myself from the enjoyment of a pleasure, in the contemplation of it; so shall take my leave of it, and you, in order to prepare myself more speedily for the charming possession of both; which, if I could enjoy together, would form the highest satisfaction I am at present capable of.

Adieu!

My ELOISE.

Here a letter is missing.

LETTER CXXII.

My dear ELOISE,

I THINK you have hit upon two misfortunes in life which, perhaps, philosophy may not be equal to; either a disappointment in our loves, or the intire separation from the person beloved. But either of these did not occur to me at the time I wrote that philosophick letter: because I have not the least apprehension of the first, as I am well convinced of your constancy and truth; and shall I think we are for ever parted, because “rough seas divide us, and whole oceans roll?” No, my best-loved, I should think the whole southern ocean

ocean but an Hellespont between you and me. Believe me, that neither my attachment here, or your engagement there, shall separate us, for any considerable time; perhaps, not much longer than our separate vocations do already——of which we will talk more at leisure soon.

Another letter of your's is just come in, where you pay me a high compliment, that you would be pleased to have my letters made publick. You acknowledge some vanity in this, and you'll find, upon recollection, that it was owing to the same, not a different turn of mind, Alexander's quarrel with Aristotle. In the desire you express of making my writings publick, there is indeed a great deal of publick spirit, and a very justifiable vanity; but neither in the sense you mean them; for, if ever I appear in print, it shall be humbly attending on you, where I shall only appear like a Dutch comment upon a classick; serve to explain the sense, incapable to express the spirit. I own, I have often thought of some such joint-work of our's, which should bear the name of the Monument: see the last Spectator of the 7th volume; but our monument should be distinguished by the title of, The Paraclete.

You have no reason to be jealous of my attachment to rural *pleasures*; it is the country *business*, which has detained me from you; and, perhaps, the greatest satisfaction I have in it, is, that it may soon the better enable me to see you often, and for a longer time. The pleasures alone, tho' they were as high as the most pastoral poet ever feigned them, could not withhold me a moment from you, whom I shall always consider as my charming Rus in Urbe; in whom is joined all the sweetness, innocence, and truth of a country life, with the highest refinements of a court.

Your argument, about our knowledge of each other in a future state, has something in it not only very pretty, but of rational philosophy, and sound divinity; and I will rest my faith upon it, as that charming hope gives me an higher relish of the world to come, than any thing else, which I have now a notion of.

Adieu! my dearest Fanny!

Your's here and hereafter.

L E T T E R CXXIII.

My dear FANNY,

Maidenhall.

I F you observe, I generally accost you by the stile above-mentioned, because it is the first that occurs to me. The Noms d'Amour of Eloise or * Ethelinda, may be more according to the rules of gallantry; but as in the latter titles you are considered as a personated character, and in the former a real one, I chuse to address you in the familiar phrase, as I well know, you have more charms in reality, than it is in the power of fiction to give you. In short, my dear girl, according to an elegant description in some of the classicks, in the novel you are *formosa*, but in yourself, *ipsa forma*. The making use of Latin sentences to you may, perhaps, appear a little pedantick, but there is, indeed, in your understanding, so little of effeminacy, that I frequently consider you, not only as a man, but a man of letters too; and I remember, I once threatened, that, if at any time you should say or do any thing rude to me, I believed, I should be brave enough to draw my sword on you.

* This was her Novel appellation.

Some elegant author says, that, in waiting for his mistress, all the rest of life is but attending till she comes; so I confess sincerely to you, that, in your absence, I have no enjoyment of myself, but in this distant intercourse between us: for, when I am at leisure to retire within myself, you are the only object placed there, which I find any pleasure to converse with:

I have observed, since the inter-regnum of our loves, a certain good breeding in my manners; and complacency of address towards you, which I am extremely pleased with; which shews the difference between a triumph over our persons, and a conquest over our minds. In a word, the reintegration of our affections, like a mutual triumph, is to be considered more as an alliance, than a conquest; and, for my own part, I confess that the regaining of your regard and esteem; like a conquest over one's own passions, has such a resignation to sense and virtue; that it inspires me with a calm, humble pride, very different from the exultation we feel upon ordinary triumphs.

I received your letter, but could not answer it last post; as my head, heart, and hand were taken up, to serve a relation and friend.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CXXIV.

My dear HARRY,

I CONFESS that, like you, I am fonder of this simple appellation, than all the florid names that ever graced romance; but, like your complaisance, this fondness bears but a late date: for I well remember a time, when I would have exchanged the most advantageous proposal of marriage,

riage, for a letter signed Orondates, Cyrus, or any other heroick name. I can now, with great pleasure, boast a change in my disposition, almost to a direct contradiction of my former sentiments; and can assure you, that I think it a very high triumph for a woman, under five and twenty, to have surmounted all the romance which could possibly be crammed into a little female soul.

• Hæried as I am, and plagued with business more than ever I was in my life, I pass many hours in silent conversations with you; and, when I start from my reveries, am surprized, and sorry at not finding you * “close by my side.”—My being immersed in business, as it confines me much at home, where I have no companion, makes all my thoughts turn upon you; and I have frequently, in reading aloud, applied to you, for your opinion of a sentiment:—Why are you not here to answer me?

• I begin to grow jealous of your contemplative pleasures, when I think my dearest Harry may indulge them, when I am far removed from a possibility of any other; yet he now prefers them to a personal converse with me —“Perhaps I am too “fond!” but let the short time limited for my earthly happiness plead my excuse.

• I am vastly indebted to you for your elegant compliment, though I am thoroughly conscious, I by no means deserve it; I am pleased with that, or any thing else, which gives my dear Harry an opportunity of shewing his wit and politeness. Not that I want fresh proofs to convince me, that, had he a proper object to inspire him, his writings might well vie with any, the greatest masters in the art of pleasing. For my own part, I solemnly declare that the addresses of the greatest monarch

• * Alluding to a song which Henry used to sing.

on earth could not, to my vanity, afford so high a triumph, as those elegant praises which your dear charming letters abound with. There is in my temper something that arises, either from benevolence to the world, or selfish vanity; (I can't tell which) that, in contradiction to Alexander's opinion, and your's, makes me wish to communicate the pleasure I receive from your writings to the world; for I look upon it as a high degree of avarice, to monopolize such an invaluable treasure.

Tho' I am transported at the thought of your considering me as a male friend, yet I find something vastly tremendous in it. The great disparity in our understandings may now be accounted for, with some shew of reason: It is the charter of our sex, to be fools; and the numberless weaknesses, which intitle us to your regard and protection, create a peculiar kind of affection, which it is natural for us to feel for creatures in our power. But should we once disclaim that *powerful* weakness, which renders us alike objects of love and pity, we are no longer intitled to that indulgence and partiality, which the wisest of us want, and the simplest have a claim to. Let me therefore treat my dearest Harry, to look on my friendship for him as truly masculine; but let my understanding still claim all the privileges of the feminine gender.

I think we have both great reason to triumph in our late reconciliation; as you, in attempting to regain my esteem, paid the highest compliment to my affection for you; while I proved to demonstration, that you had merits sufficient to surmount my pride, and your own failings.—May we long continue to receive pleasure from the recollection of our past uneasinesses, and to look on that, as the happiest era of our lives, that restored us to each other.

I heartily wish your friend success, as you are interested for him; but I shall be very apt to hate him bravely, if he should be again the occasion of your missing a post.

I am, my dear Harry,
constantly and sincerely your's.

L E T T E R CXXV.

My dear FANNY,

I HAVE spent some days at ———, which is esteemed a fine seat. Nature indeed has been generous to it, but the lord of the soil has tortured her most inhumanly: He has spurr'd a free horse to death, and she seems languishing under the unskillfulness of her rider. It would be a compliment to stile him a man of *no taste*; for one of a *false taste* is much worse. This is a taste without judgment, which one frequently meets instances of. To such a person may be objected, the character which Perulant gives of Witwou'd, "That the fellow said
" a great many good things, which wanted only
" the circumstances of time and place to render
" them agreeable." Such an improver as this would introduce the wildness of a wood into a parterre, plant a willow pendant o'er a fish-pond, and build a pavilion resembling a ruin. An architect of this perverseness would erect an Italian palace in Scotland; nay, I have seen portico's in Ireland built to the north, and Winter Summer-houses in gardens, with very comfortable fire-places in them. I desired the owners to *lift* the doors and windows.

Now we are upon this subject, have you not been treated with spiced meats, in the dog-days, and *Alt fresco* deserts at Christmas?

I remember a very *pretty* gentleman, he had a good fortune, was *bred abroad*, wore good cloaths,
and

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and was the *thing of taste* in his time: He did me the favour to invite me, along with a set of rival and admiring ladies, to a *chamber concert*, many years ago, into which he introduced the *martial musick* of trumpets and kettle drums.

There was a tame fool of fortune, who not long since lived in this country: He had spent the carnival at a friend's house, where he heard the *compliments of the season* offered to every new guest: He concluded, that this was the ceremony of address, to all friends that one would make welcome; and some time after, in the month of April, I am not sure it was the first, when a gentleman called to see him at his own lodging, he wished him a *merry Christmas*. Now this man had observation, but wanted the sense of application; tho' not more than the persons we have been just speaking of. Direct your letters as usual, and adieu.

HENRY:

L E T T E R. CXXVI:

Dear FANNY,

I WAS as bad last night as ever; the reason I did not appear so the night before, was, that I did not sleep long enough to give my rheum strength sufficient to oppress me. It is now near two, before I could set out; and shall have but just time to reach Naas, perhaps not, before night; so can't call on you to-day, as I promised.

I thank you for your letter this morning, and am almost sorry I did not want your favour, for I have a pleasure in being obliged to you. But perhaps I shall soon; and will then call on you. I beg you will write me word, by Tuesday's post, whether you will speed the frolick of coming down to the

country; who the party is to be, and what the stage?——I mean the place of meeting. Don't, my dear Fanny, have any doubts or qualms about my desire to see you, because I did not receive the proposal with transport, at a time when all my faculties were over-powered by disorder, and want of rest; besides, you surely ought to distinguish between the effects of pleasure, and those of joy; the transports of the one your coyness has refused me, but the tranquillity of the other your conversation, upon any terms, will always afford me.

Consider too, if I did not press you to a fatigue, and expence, for this, and the other reasons above hinted, I should not have been treated with such unkind suspicion.

Whenever your words or actions can bear two meanings, I always arrest the best; and where they can admit but of one, and that not favourable, I set them by, as not to be accounted for.

I beg to hear from you,—and tell me of your health.

I am, my dearest Fanny,

Your's, without doubt.

LETTER CXXVII:

FRANCES to HENRY.

I RECEIVED your last adieu, and am in reality more obliged to you, than I should have been for a much kinder; for by convincing me, you felt no concern for our separation, you lessened mine extremely.

I sincerely hope that the freshness and purity of the country air will, in a few days, restore you to perfect health; and I make not the least doubt, but its contemplative pleasures will quickly recover your
spirits.

spirits to that calm, uniform, philosophick cheerfulness, which the interposing impertinence of disagreeable, or (at best) insipid objects may, for some time past, have ruffled.

You compliment me extremely, when you suppose me capable of distinguishing the effects of joy from those of pleasure: I have been but little conversant with either of them, therefore my ignorance is excuseable, should I tell you, I always looked upon them as twin sisters, and so very like, that it was difficult to know one from t'other. I think, too, they are the joint offspring of Love and Reason, who, disputing to whom they should pay most obedience, quarrelled, and have never since been reconciled.

But, to speak in a more natural way, I look upon joy and pleasure to be synonymous terms; they arise from one faculty, or affection of the mind; and joy is nothing more or less than the first and strongest emotion, which breaks out, on our being really pleased. I will not pretend to say, that my definition is right; I have only given my opinion.——

But this I know, that, if I am not capable of abstracting joy from pleasure, I can, at least distinguish pleasure from indifference:——For this reason you may justly suppose the party at an end, from the moment it was mentioned; and I here give you my word, it is the last of the kind I shall ever propose with you. I hope you will pardon what is past, on the very sincere promise of amendment.

I am far from being displeased; at finding your prudence superior to mine: It has indeed been so, thro' the whole course of our acquaintance; but, as I believe, there are few people who have more quickness and vivacity in their dispositions, so there is no person breathing whose spirits are more easily damped than mine; for want of resolution has hitherto

thereto been my greatest fault, as well as misfortune.

—As I have been often led by persuasion to many things, contrary to my inclinations; while, from want of resolution, I have left undone those things which reason, virtue, prudence, and pride dictated.

—In both these cases, I consider myself as very blameable; by acting in direct opposition to the little understanding that Providence has blessed me with. In this light, I think my supporting any kind of correspondence with you an offence against myself, more unpardonable, than any I ever yet had will or power to commit, to the prejudice of any other creature. But, tho' this, like all other acts of folly, carries its punishment in the commission, I am determined not to leave it in your power, to make that an act of necessity, which I design a sacrifice.

—And as I am not capable of affording you any kind of happiness, without injuring myself, I think it is high time to put an end to our mutual uneasiness, and remain satisfied with the pleasing belief, that we should each do much, to make the other happy.

You know this resolution has taken up my thoughts for some time; and I solemnly declare, I mention it now from no other motive, but a design of reducing it to practice. I have not one doubt with regard to your affection for me: I do indeed believe you love me; but I am certain *that* love can only be productive of misery to me; and as you are, and ever have been, a thousand times dearer to me, than myself, I can better bear a voluntary punishment, than any inflicted by you; for there, the means would double the misfortune.

I thank you for your kind construction of my words and actions; may they ever appear to you in their native, genuine light! You will then think of me, "as one that loved not wisely, but too well." I have not been out of doors since I saw you, nor
well

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well one moment. I had a violent return of the cholic, about three hours after you left me; I could not rest in bed, but walked about the room all night; by this means I increased my cold, and have now got a very comfortable cough. I flatter myself, your's has left you; if so, I shall bear mine with great patience; for, tho' I wish we should both "utter the same harmony," I would not have the sympathetick power extended to pain, or discord.

I heartily wish you the compliments of the season, and a long and uninterrupted succession of healthful and happy years.

I am now, and ever shall be,

Your truly affectionate friend and servant,

FRANCES.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Dear FANNY,

I AM just got home, for I was so ill on the road, that I was not able to perform the journey in the usual time. What alarms me is, that I neither find myself better, or worse; which makes me apprehend, that the disorder is become part of my constitution; for, to borrow an allusion from moral things, it has been observed that persons of equal tempers have been always found, in love or friendship, more remarkable for constancy, than those who are subject to heats and colds.

Memorandum,——— This cold I got it the court of chancery; and I fear it will last, like a chancery suit, for life; tho', to shew you I am not splenetick about the matter, let us talk of death and burial a little; for those who are most afraid, care least to speak of them. As to my death, I would chuse a sudden one, contrary to a prayer in the *litany*; for

I hope

I hope nothing from a death-bed repentance, as, by the tenor of a man's life he ought, in justice, to be judged. If I was to linger, I should chuse to be in pain; as the getting ease might better reconcile me to the thoughts of death.

As to my burial, I do not like any of the methods used by the antients, or moderns. The Egyptian mummy, which was in the highest esteem, I dislike more than all; for I can't bear the thought of lying a moment idle, either alive or dead; for which reason I prefer burning the body to any other way, (not in the Asbesto shroud) because the parts dissipated in smoke fall immediately to earth again, and become the first food of plants, which immediately become the first food of animals, so that a man may have a resurrection of every part of his body, in a short time after his death; which, tho' he will not be conscious of, will surely flatter his vanity, as well as the thoughts of fame, which he is supposed to know as little of. But tho' I prefer burning, for these reasons, to any other method usually practised, yet, if I were to chuse for myself, I would rather be devoured by beasts; as, by that means, I should more immediately become part of a living animal; and the beasts I would name should be dogs, because their instinct comes the nearest to human reason, of any brute; and the dogs I would pitch upon should be three, of three different kinds; a mastiff, for its courage; a hound, for its sagacity; and a spaniel, for its fidelity.

I have just received a letter from you, which may not improperly be taken notice of here, as the thoughts of death, and parting from you, are equally distant from me. How could you write so peevishly, my little cross pet?—I am extremely concerned to hear you are ill, and beg to know how you are, by the return of the post.

LETTER CXXIX.

FRANCES to HENRY.

A KIND of superstition, which I have neither power nor inclination to account for, impels me, in contradiction to my reason, to write to you. When I wrote last, I resolved to write no more; there is nothing in your letter that requires an answer, yet in a room full of company, where I have dined and supped, (for it is now near twelve o'clock) I cannot resist a something like infatuation, that prompts me to tell you, I am really concerned, and alarmed at the account you give me of yourself, with regard to your mind, as well as body. "Dost thou delight to make a constant martyr of me?" There is something so extremely ill-natured in your endeavouring to shock me with the mention of your death, as I should not easily forgive, did not my superior concern for your ill health and gloomy habit of mind, absorb all other considerations. — That the thought of death is, and should be frequent with all rational mortals, I allow; but, had you even common tenderness for me, it is the last subject you would treat on. It is indeed the only melancholy thought you have not rendered familiar to me; and it is a kind of disgrace to me, that I am not more conversant with what I have so often experienced — for death is parting.

This day twelvemonth we were reconciled; and now, with a heart and eyes overflowing with the sincerest tenderness, I bid adieu to my dear Harry; and all those vain imaginary schemes of happiness, which my fond heart had formed for future days! —

May every happiness in life attend you! and if you wish to give me ease, tell me, as soon as it is in
your

your power, that you are well—I neither wish nor desire, that you should take more notice of this than my former letter; excuse its folly and inconsistency, and believe me.

Your faithful and affectionate
friend and servant.

LETTER CXXX.

My dear FANNY,

YOU first banish me your love, and then seem concerned at the apprehensions of my death. Leonora, in the *Revenge*, just after she has stabbed herself, takes notice of such an inconsistency as this in Alonzo. I shall say no more on this head, for the same reason that, as you say, I took no notice of your former letter; which is, that I am resolved never to make replication to any paragraph of your's, which makes me uneasy; lest the altercation should grow to such a warmth, as is inconsistent with *that*, which I sincerely hope may always subsist between us. However, I took notice of the whole subject of your letter, I think, in the latter part of mine; and I am rejoiced to find you think the same way, by saying, in your last, that "death is parting."

I thank you extremely for your concern about my health; and be assured, my dearest Fanny, that this is equal to any one reason I have to be concerned about it myself. Upon my honour, if I had apprehended that letter would have given you any uneasiness, I would not have wrote it; for, tho' the unkindness of your's might have justified such a reply, yet it rendered me too low-spirited to be malicious; and, in general, that subject has, and will, whenever urged, give me a great deal of unfeigned uneasiness and concern; but must not, ought

ought not ever to raise my resentment. I spoke of death, as I hope, you did of parting, without a certain or a serious thought about it; for, since Nero's days, a man may make his will without the danger of dying. I am, however, a great deal better than I was at that time, tho' without using any sort of means, not even as much as I did in row; and I believe, if I could stay within for two days, I should be perfectly well; but, tho' I have no person at work these holidays, I can't help frequently to haunt and revisit these dear scenes, late rendered more dear; where we have sat, walked, and conversed together.

I find my love of solitude increasing every day; which inclination, beside the enjoyment of solitude itself, gives me a very flattering pleasure; for, according to a rational and refined opinion or sentiment of your's, mentioned in a late conversation, we are not only to perfect ourselves in virtue here, but also in a true taste and relish for the pleasures of the blessed, if we would reach the sublimity of those joys which we are taught to hope for. Now, methinks my aversion from society, and frequent retiring, as it were, within myself, in a great measure, prepares me for the enjoyment of that intuitive converse, which spirits or angels hold with each other, by intellectual vision; without the paltry, slow, and imperfect aid of sounds; of which spiritual act, I think, the communing with our own hearts, reflection, or mental soliloquy, have a very great resemblance.

Other lovers say, they would retire from all society for you; but I would quit even solitude for your converse, as it is a nearer approach to those pleasures I hinted at above, and in some sort the enjoyment of that heaven upon earth; But

“ They

“ They say, bad men would be unblest’d in heaven,

“ What is my crime, which makes me so with you ?”

Oh ! “ Why am I sent a banish’d man to roam ?”

Adieu my heart’s dear Fanny ! I am your’s in this world, and the next.

HENRY.

LETTER CXXXI.

My dear FANNY,

WHEN we read a Spectator of Addison’s together lately in Dublin, you may remember, I cavilled at his saying the will was one of the *faculties* of the soul. When I came home, I looked into Locke’s Essay upon the Human Understanding, and finding him in the same story, I began to reflect a little upon this head, and found, I had apprehended that the will was said to be one of the *special qualities* of the soul ; but the word *faculty*, being a comprehensive term, and signifying a power, then whatever a soul has the power of doing is called one of its faculties, tho’ not one of its essential qualities ; so that, in the general sense of the phrase, neither Addison or Locke may be reprehended ; but as they both join *willing*, which is but a power, to *thinking*, which is a property, I apprehend they are mistaken in their metaphysics, by ranking them under the same class. And it was this error, which, occurring strongly to me at the time I mention, made me hastily conclude, that if there was any mistake in Addison, it must be rather in his words than his sense.

I was well pleased I had this occasion of looking into Mr. Locke’s Essay, (which is a book I had never

never read but once, when I was very young) because, upon this same subject, he has affirmed a thing which has provoked me extremely; and if he has not been called to account for it before now, it would surprize me; but, as I never met any thing written on this head, I shall take the liberty of answering him.

In the first chapter of his second book he affirms, that the soul does not always think; that thinking is not part of its essence, but one of its operations, *i. e.* faculty or power in the diffusive sense. This I deny; for, if we can suppose a soul not to think for an instant, we can suppose it not to think for a day, a month, a year, and so for eternity: Which is contrary to the nature of a soul, therefore impossible: For wherein does a soul consist, if not in thought and reflection? He compares thought to motion; and says, A body, tho' it sometimes moves, does not necessarily move. How imperfect is this reasoning! and how weak all illustrations of spiritual operations, by referring them to sensible acts! A body does not move of itself, but either mediately or immediately by some spirit; and is therefore dependent on spirit for its operations: But surely spirit is independent on matter, and self-sufficient in its own powers; and, as the several qualities, properties, or faculties of the soul, are not really distinct, but only philosophically divided, to give us a better or more formal method of reasoning about them; as it is the whole soul which thinks, reflects, reasons, &c. then, should any of these qualities or faculties cease to operate but for an instant, what should ever call them to action again?—except that Almighty Power, which first set them to work: and this would be equal to a new creation of that, or any other spirit; and to be repeated as often as it began to think, reflect, or reason. Which as the author of nature acts always by the
most

most simple laws, we are not to suppose, without stronger reasons, than weak men's mere hypothesis. In short, if thinking is not essential to a soul, what are its essential qualities? If it has no essential qualities, then it exists not at all. Extension is essential to matter; when matter ceases to have extension, it ceases to exist.

Mr. Locke speaks against the soul's essential thought, to introduce his reasoning against innate ideas; but, as innate ideas are one of the proofs brought for the being of a God, I will never give them up, upon any reasoning less than conviction. He shews us indeed how we may come by most of the ideas we have, without any previous impression; but this does not prove we have no such previous impression; for the same truth may be conveyed to us by different ways. I grant him, that the ideas of colours, and of all sensible objects, may be acquired by experience; but if truth, beauty, harmony, or order, were not originally impressed on our souls, nothing in this world, nor even the objects themselves, could excite our ideas of them. All the ideas we have in common with brutes, I will allow we may acquire, as they do—but no farther.

I am neither better or worse of my cold; nor more or less affectionately and sincerely your's, my dear Fanny—which I shall continue as long as my innate ideas of truth, beauty, harmony, and order shall exist.

LETTER CXXXII.

THE pleasure I received from my dear Harry's last letter, like the intuitive converse he mentions, can only be imagined, not expressed. I care not how inconsistent you think me, provided you believe, that

“ Sorrow

"Sorrow ne'er can touch my mind,

"Whilst you are well, and not unkind."

Yet, notwithstanding that my every word and action prove, even against my will, the strength of my affection for you, I cannot help earnestly desiring to put an end to the continual anxiety, which my attachment does, and ever will produce. I still think, that parting from what we love much dearer than ourselves, is far more dreadful than the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body; for, in general, the soul is weary of its confinement, and tired out with pain; it longs to mingle with its kindred spirits, to satisfy its boundless thirst of knowledge; to range thro' all the liquid fields of air, to contemplate the glories of its own essence, in the immediate presence of that Almighty Being from whom it sprang. Perhaps it longs to be again restored to the dear converse of some much-loved and long-lamented friend. On the contrary, a person in this world, who is separated from those he has loved long, and well, bears the worst kind of death, a living one; and may be considered in the same state, as I should suppose an angelick being, if banished from his Creator's presence, compelled to take a human form, and live on earth, among the sons of men. His retaining a strong idea of the happiness, he had once enjoyed, must double every distress; and his desire to be restored to the converse he was deprived of must render all other painful to him.

Let me now ask you, if you suppose, that any rational being would voluntarily rush into such a scene of misery, as I have described? Yet this must be the end of all that love, that constancy and truth, I have preserved inviolable to you——painful reflection! this last paragraph has sunk my spirits so very low, that I must quit the subject——Oh! that my heart could shut it out for ever!

I think

I think it is Cowley says, "A man must entirely be divested of all *affections* as well as *passion*, before he can enjoy the pleasures of solitude: For, if his mind be possessed of either, he had better be in a fair than a wood; for our passions may, like petty thieves, pick our pockets in the midst of company; but like robbers, they use to strip, bind, or murder us, when they catch us alone: This is but to retreat from men, and fall into the hands of the devil." I therefore congratulate you, and should endeavour to condole myself, did not your happiness always appear of more moment to me, than my own; but as I have not so entirely subdued my passions, as you seem to have done, I can only pretend to assure you, from the sincerity of my heart, that I would prefer your company to that of any person, who does, or ever did exist; I do not except any one of the first, or last Augustan age.——And I may go farther, by assuring you, that, if I know my own heart, I would prefer you to all of them, and live in shades, with thee, and love alone; or, to use the words of the author I have already quoted,——

"With thee, for ever, in woods could rest, &c."—

Your remembering any sentiment of mine, affords the highest triumph both to my love and vanity: For you, and you only, can raise either. I don't wonder at all that you should prefer communing with your own heart, to any other conversation this world can afford; it surely must be a kind of anticipation of those celestial joys, we are to suppose the portion of the blessed; as it must continually fill your mind with the highest sentiments of gratitude and rapture to the Divine Being, who has been graciously pleased to bring you so much nearer his infinite perfection, than your fellow-creatures. He has, indeed, my dearest Harry, blessed you with
such

such uncommon talents, as render it impossible for you to be negatively good; and must either make you an ornament or disgrace to that rank of beings you are placed in.

I thank you heartily for your very elegant compliment, but I am well convinced, both from reason and experience, that you must have less understanding, or I more, before you can possibly prefer my company to your own.

I received your essay, and am excessively angry that you have left me nothing to say on the occasion; it is so like conviction, which I hate, because it destroys argument. How was it possible for you to find words to demonstrate the undoubted truths, which you have proved? For I look upon this to be the most difficult species of writing.

Now for myself, which, by just gradation, I mention last. I have been very ill with constant cholics, ever since you left town; I grow worse every day, and am at last prevailed on to take an emetick; which disagreeable operation I shall set about, the moment I have finished this abominable scrawl. I absolutely don't know what I write: My aunt has been talking to me ever since I took up the pen. I am really ashamed to let such a collection of blots, blunders, and tautologies go out of my hands; but, if I ever had any talent for writing, it is intirely worn out; and I set about it with as much reluctance as I do eating, when I have no appetite; merely because I know it is necessary to my supporting life.

You are not "sent a banish'd man, to roam;" it is I, alas! who am the exile—I hope to hear, by to morrow's post, that you have quite got the better of your cold. I shall always receive the utmost pleasure from your letters; but as you may easily perceive I cannot write, I therefore hope you will excuse me. You would pity me, if you knew

how I am plagued with conversation.—Adieu, my dear Harry! I am, as usual, your sincerely affectionate

Friend and servant.

LETTER CXXXIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM heartily concerned at the bad account you give me of your health; and must intreat you will act by me in that affair as I did by you; for when I found you were fondly alarmed at my disorder, I used all the methods I could think of, to get myself well against the next post, that I might ingenuously give you an account of my recovery; which I partly feigned in my last letter, to make you easy—but I shall make no obligations to Hygea for the cure, if she has neglected your health to take care of mine.

There is really something unaccountable in the turn of mind, you seem to have been in, for some time past: you say, you fear we shall some time or other part, therefore desire to do it now; “so run into the danger, to avoid the apprehension.” Such caprice as this would make us banish friends, children, and every blessing of life from our enjoyment, because, perhaps, one day or other we may be deprived of them. What reason in the world have you to apprehend any separation in our loves? I declare, upon my honour, that I am not in the least sensible of any decay in my regard, affection, assiduity, love, or friendship for you; nor am I conscious of any engagement, scheme, policy, or ambition, which should make it honourable, or honest, even to wish my attachment less to you. Surely the fond expostulation I make with you, at present,

present, ought to convince you of the sincerity and ingenuousness of this declaration ; for, if my fickleness or caprice had given me other sentiments toward you, what a vast and lucky relief would your present and late behaviour be to me ! How readily should I then take you at your word, happy to have my inconstancy accounted for to the world, and justified even by the person I was willing to forsake ! Indeed, my dearest Fanny, if ever you mention this subject to me again, there will be no way left of accounting for it, but supposing that you find something in your own heart, which may make you apprehend that my constancy, love, and attachment may some time or other be a reproach to you.

There is another passage in your last letter, which I absolutely interdict you for the future. How can you be so disingenuous, as to say, you cannot write ? For no-body, who writes well, can be ignorant of it ; nor can any-body ever write well, who does not think they do. I declare, I never met with writings in any language more sensible, more delicate, or more correct, than most of your letters ; and, if I do not, upon every occasion, express my just sense of them, it is because I really think their merit is above my praise ; and whenever I do mention them, in the manner I do now, it is more for the vanity of shewing you my own taste, than to pay any compliment to your's.

We have had the most disingenuous weather I ever remember, since I came down to the country : It promises and threatens by turns, but fulfils neither ; and keeps one in a state of uncertainty, both with regard to business or pleasure, which is very perplexing. I cannot undertake any business at home, nor can I amuse myself with going abroad. My corn is growing too rank, and my sheep are dying of the red water. Write me a Lapland ode, my dear Muse, to invite over some frost and snow

immediately, or we poor farmers shall be undone. I forget whether I told you before, that I have set the last acre of Belmont since I came down, which has made my mind very easy, and therefore I am pleased at mentioning it to you.

I wish my dearest Fanny joy of every advantage of mine in life!—Farewel, my charming girl, and believe, may be certain, that I am ever your's.

HENRY.

LETTER CXXXIV.

THE kind concern my dear Harry expressed in his last letter for my health, would, I think, render me unpardonable, if I did not feel as much pleasure in acquainting him with my recovery, as, I flatter myself, he will receive from the account. I am indeed much better, thanks to my regard for you; for, were I not persuaded that my life is of moment to your happiness, how earnestly should I wish to abandon it! The love of life, which is, I believe, implanted in the heart of every creature, renders death formidable to us while we are in perfect health; but when the animal spirits are weakened by pain, when we only live to misery, our sentiments are wholly changed, and we wish for death, as a relief from torment. Think then, if my every thought, hope, and wish were not centered in you, how earnestly should I have desired a deliverance from pain! But, perhaps I deceive myself; perhaps in contradiction to what I have said, the voice of nature more powerful than even that of love, made me wish to live,—perhaps, my life is of no consequence to you,—“I will, however, endeavour to banish the cruel reason, that would inform me; and preserve my illusion, that I may preserve my life.”

As

As my first wish is to be beloved by you, my second is to be approved; let me then, my dear Harry, giving full force to your protestations, account for what you unjustly call caprice. I own, I love you enough to be guilty of the very folly you charge me with; imbittering the present happiness, by the fear of losing it. But it is not from this motive that I have mentioned our parting. I know and feel that my affection and friendship for you increase daily; therefore cannot suspect that your's for me are lessened; but whenever I dare venture to ask myself, what will be the end of our mutual attachment, I tremble at the reply my reason makes, and almost wish we hated one another. For the present, my regard for you renders every pleasure in life insipid to me; and every accident indifferent, that has not some relation to you;—my whole time and thoughts are devoted to you; and business, or pleasure, are alike hateful to me. For this indifference to the objects that surround me, I think myself amply rewarded, by the pleasure I receive from your letters; and wish for no other recompence for all my love and tenderness, but a continuation of your's. But tell me, my dearest Harry, what will all this end in? The little circle of my acquaintance speak of my attachment to you with seeming pity, from a belief, that you have none to me. The world, in general, treat me in the severest manner, on your account. Answer me now, my heart's dear Harry, with truth and justice, for reason prompts the question, and honour will not dally longer, can you indeed lay your hand on that dear breast, where Fanny's heart inhabits, and tell me you have love, honour, and constancy enough, to repay all her past, present, and future sufferings, by seriously intending, whenever it is in your power, to make her your wife?—Consider well this point, for it is of the highest moment to us both; and on your answer

intirely depends my continuing those pleasing ideas, which have hitherto supported me, thro' the various scenes of distress, I have suffered for you ; or, by a proper resolution, erasing them, and you, for ever from my heart. Let not a false delicacy for yourself, or an affected tenderness for me, prevent your speaking your sentiments with that frankness, which, I think, I ever merited from you ; and be assured, your speaking candidly should it even acquaint me with the most unwelcome truths, will raise you higher in my esteem, than your attempting to amuse me with unmeaning expressions of regard. I do not indeed suspect, that you have hitherto said any thing to me, which you did not think ; but, as the matter in question is of the nicest nature, I would guard against every thing, which could possibly aggravate the misfortune I am taught to apprehend.

Your reproaching me with want of tenderness I can readily forgive : First, as my heart is armed so strong with truth, that it repels the darts, nor suffers it to wound your image, which is lodged in its inmost recesses ;—next, as my so often mentioning our parting, without having courage to assign the cause, might well warrant your seeming suspicion of my affection ; tho' I dare venture to affirm, you never yet injured me so far, as in reality to doubt it.

Let me now, my dear and best beloved Harry, conjure you by all the love and tenderness you ever vowed to me, to rest assured, that the words which I have wrote, on the melancholy subject of our parting, have been so many daggers to my heart ; and that no light suspicion of your love, or idle caprice of my own, has occasioned my reducing you to an explanation, which I would part with a limb to avoid ; for tho' I cannot, will not doubt your love, I tremble at the trial.—No, my own heart

heart bears witness to your truth, it is filled with you, and you alone; why then should I not, in contradiction to the world, believe this faithful evidence?——Alas! I fear it is too much your friend!

Deliver me, I intreat you, my heart's dear Harry, from the painful situation I am in: Raise me, at once, to a higher sense of happiness, than I have yet known, or plunge me into such a state of misery, as can only be relieved by the sad cure of all our ills.

I thank you for your account of Belmont. You may indeed congratulate me on every circumstance which gives you pleasure; assured of this, that I receive a double joy by reflection; and, were we this moment for ever separated, your happiness and interests would still continue far dearer to me than my own.

You have commanded me not to apologize for my writing——I obey,——tho' conscious that, as all my letters are wrote from the heart, they have nothing to atone for their folly, but their sincerity; which will ever impel me, thro' every season, change, and chance of life, to subscribe myself.

Your's, and only your's:

FRANCES.

Henry received the foregoing letter, and the following, just as he was going up to Dublin, to attend the Hilary term 1750. He answered the second, but took no notice of the former till he saw her; for he did not chuse to give any thing under his hand, which might be construed into a contract. He apprehended no danger from herself, but did not care to put it in the power of accident, or the indiscretion of her friends, to discover an engagement of this kind, as it might have some

ill effect upon his fortunes: But, as he thought for very reasonable a question should not remain unanswered, he told her, at meeting, the sentiments he had conceived about her, when she was at his house in the country; which, by frequent reflection, were rather strengthened than abated, and at length, by her late letter, confirmed into a determined resolution. He told her, that the lawyers had assured him his family suit in the Exchequer, for a considerable sum of money, would be determined in a term or two; that he was to have a settlement made upon him on that event; and that he would take her hand, as soon as every thing was made secure. But the two terms passed away, and matters appeared just as far from a conclusion as they were twenty years before. However, tho' the lawyers broke their words with Henry, he performed his to Frances; and, waving all conditions, married her privately on the 12th day of May following; with an injunction to keep it a secret from all her friends and relations, even from her aunt, with whom she lived: So that lady O——— was the only confidante made upon that occasion; and this for two reasons, first on account of solving appearances to her nicety; and secondly, that Frances made it a point to have some person of sufficient weight for justifying her character to the world, when Henry should think proper to acknowledge his marriage publickly.

LETTER CXXXV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I AM but just able to tell my dear Harry, that I have great hopes of my recovery, because it is hardly possible I should be worse. My disorder is of an intermittent nature, and generally makes its attacks, like a thief in the night. I was so violently ill, as to be obliged to have my apothecary called out of bed, at four o'clock this morning. Poor Kitty has a miserable time of it, for her rest is as much broken as mine. During my intervals of pain, which are very short, I find myself oppressed with a stupid kind of languor, not unlike a lethargy. Can you believe that even bodily pain could reduce me to such a state? I am more alarmed at this, than any other part of my disorder, as it is intirely contrary to my natural constitution; but perhaps it is only the effect of pain, that wearies out my spirits, and leaves this hateful lassitude upon them. I am this moment obliged to leave off; it is impossible to tell you what I suffer; I am amazed at my own strength, as I have sometimes been at that constancy, which makes me, sick or well, living or dying, your's.

I am again relieved from extreme pain: This last fit has been much shorter than the former ones, which is, I hope, a good symptom; but still so weak and trembling, that I can scarce hold the pen. Why are not you here, to pet me? They have ordered something to make me sleep; I will take that, or any thing else, that they tell me will do me good, because you desire it. In the mean time, let me know you with my health, as earnestly as I do your's, and that shall avail me more than ten physicians.

LETTER CXXXVI:

My dearest sick PET,

I AM just come home from a week's business, and received your letter, which, by my absence, has lain a post unanswered, and which, indeed, I should answer with the *ipse veni*, as I shall do, at present; for, while I am writing, I am ordering fresh horses to be saddled, and it shall be their fault, if I don't outride the post. And dost thou wish me there, to comfort you? I will be there, my well-loved heart, with all the softness, tenderness, with all the woman in my soul, to ease thy throbbing breast and languid head: Nay, with more unfeigned solicitude, than woman ever could feel; for the vainest woman must be envious of you. Your melancholy account of yourself has made me recollect that line in Tickell, which we could not think of the last time we were together, and speaking of that pretty poem:

“Sad luxury, to vulgar minds unknown.”

Which passage also occurred to me, when I wrote to you on the subject of melancholy pleasures, tho' I did not quote it.

I hope, my cross pet, that it is owing to the peevishness of sickness, your saying you are surprized at your constancy toward me. Any fickleness in that point must be charged upon yourself; for, without vanity, I may say that it is impossible I can ever be less amiable than I was at first. If from thenceforward, I became capable of sense, science, or philosophy, I owe the inspiration to you, and you alone, my Iphigenia. When the sun withdraws his beams, is it a reflection upon our horizon, that it shines no more? But like that, tho' I lose the light, I shall retain the warmth, till I am earth indeed. You have

Have really, my charming woman, not only given me a relish for life, but a true taste for every thing in it, which is worth living for. And as you have given me happiness, I look upon it, on some occasions, as an ungenerous act; to interrupt or to endeavour to destroy that bliss, 'till I consider you in the light of a woman who has brought a great fortune to a beggar, and has consequently a natural right to squander what part she pleases. From you, my charming Muse, I have learned particularly three things, more valuable than all the science of the Sorbonne—Chearfulness, without mirth; gravity, without spleen; and, oh! take it for your pains, love, with esteem; the warmest love, with the highest esteem.

Farewel! Farewel indeed! I shall conclude
Your's in haste—to fly to you.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

L E T T E R. CXXXVII.

Dear FANNY,

I CAME hither in spite of very opposing weather. Along the road I perceived marks of the violent storm; and found the great sign and half of the stables of this inn carried away by it. I beg, the first account you have of the yacht, you will let me hear it.

I amused myself, on the way, with reflecting upon every person, circumstance, and thing, which I parted from, at Racool: But the only occasion I had to philosophize, was on little Jenny; for, from playing with the child, I took a hint, to examine into an opinion, which the world seems possessed with, and perhaps receive it upon trust from one another, as they do a great many others, without inquiring philosophically into the matter.

I remember Mr. K——, a man of tender affections, but withal, a person of excellent understanding, playing one day with a pretty child of his own, said, that he was, ever since it was born, waiting for, and attending to that impulse or instinct, which is called natural affection; but that all he could perceive was, that he loved it more and more from use, as he had done other people's children before.

In short, when does this particular attachment seize us? If it is natural, we should perceive it the instant we heard the first cry; but, at that time, we knew nothing of the matter. If we are sensible of it some time after, it is merely owing to that habit, which Mr. K—— mentioned; to that Proteus of nature, custom; which has misled most of those philosophers who have read men and manners, without having studied human nature,—— which is pretending to physick, without having learned anatomy.

But even the instant the child is born, would not the parent rather *your's* should die than his? So he would your horse.—— The love of property is natural; but this is part of a general partiality, not an instance of a particular attachment. Men get their pictures drawn, bequeath fortunes to strangers, nay, raise obelisks to bear their names; but this is natural vanity, not natural affection.

If either parent was affected with this impulse, let us naturally suspect the mother most, as the child is more immediately part of herself, her affections softer, and her understanding weaker; and yet how little does Providence seem inclined to trust this natural instinct, by furnishing her with proper nourishment for the child, and making it turn to pain and disemper, if not that way applied, or otherwise carried off, by methods of like operation?

Adieu!

LETTER CXXXVIII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Castle-Dermot, Thursday evening.

I HAD a fine day hither, and am now stretching my limbs before a good fire, drinking your health, and all your healths. I find there is no place, I enjoy myself so much in, as an inn. I am there so intirely my own master; so detached from the world, and disingaged both from business, or the vain pursuit of pleasure, that I feel a certain contemplative calmness in my mind, which gives me a higher satisfaction than any of the active spheres of life can do. However, I must interrupt this soliloquy, to go and take care of poor George, who fell with his horse, within a mile of this town, and is much bruised; he had a very narrow escape of his life.

My sincere regards to Kitty. I am, my dearest Fanny,

Your's as before.

HENRY.

- " Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
- " Let wheresoe'er his stage have been,
- " Must surely own, he always found
- " The warmest welcome at an inn."

Unde nescio

LETTER CXXXIX.

Dear FANNY,

Maidenhall.

I HAD the satisfaction, when I came home, of finding every thing here safe from the storm; tho' the whole country round me has suffered infinite

nite damage, of house-tops, ricks of hay, and stacks of corn carried off, and trees torn up by the roots. —while I have forfeited but a few slates, and some of the branches of my elms dishevelled. There is one piece of damage, I just heard of, which will give you some concern, that above two hundred of the fine trees in Dunmore-park are snapped short to the stumps,

As I have no letter from you to answer, and have not been long enough in the country to meet with any entertaining circumstances to send you, the only amusement I can give you, is from what I read; and as I am in Montaigne, which is also your study, at present, I shall occasionally give you hints of what I find remarkable in that vague, diffuse, witty, and sensible author.

In his chapter stiled Pedantry, I was pleased to find him speak a great deal upon a subject, you may remember, I am very fond of; which is, the distinction between learning and wisdom. What I have to say on that head you have heard; what he says upon it I refer you to; and shall only quote one passage, because it is whimsical, and somewhat in your manner.

He one day was at a loss for accounting how several men, of the greatest learning among his acquaintance, were very silly, weak persons. Upon which, a lively woman in company said, “That in order to make room for other men’s sense, their own must be squeezed up into so narrow a compass, as will not leave it a power of exerting itself.” To which I shall only add this remark of my own, by way of illustration: that the understanding, like a nation, should always depend upon its own proper force; for auxiliaries too often make slaves of those they were called upon to assist. In short, it is this servile obedience, and blind deference we pay to the antients, joined
to

to an indolent despair of excelling such great patterns, which has almost put a period to the advancement of science, or wisdom; so that all the knowledge of the moderns is but the learning of the antients: inasmuch that, if you propose a subject in natural or moral philosophy, to be discussed by any of the present adepts in art or science, instead of pressing forward into a disquisition of the yet inexhausted fund of human reason, they will poorly recur to what Archimedes, Plato, or Seneca said upon such matters. Here take a quotation, by way of parody:

“Men should press forward in Truth’s glorious chace,

“They who look backward often lose the race.”

It has been matter of astonishment to these latter ages of the world, how the great geni of antiquity, at times when learning and science were in their infancy, could shine forth with such amazing lustre; which, far from attributing to their own natural force, they have poorly called in the aid of inspiration to account for. What a mean and stupid exposition is this of such extraordinary phænomena! when the true reasons lie hid in the very causes of their admiration. The mind of man, naturally active and inquisitive after truth, not finding where-withal to satisfy its unbounded curiosity in the darkness and ignorance of the early ages of the world; retired within itself; and, attending closely to the ideas in its own bosom, from whence, in truth, all human science and wisdom is extracted, did, from such unbiassed contemplation, arrive to a higher pitch in the age of a man, than an academy is able to attain to in a century. They were certainly guilty of some gross errors in theory, and a manifest neglect, or want of method, in their reasonings; which has been the sole employment of

of posterity, to correct the one, and new model the other; nay, some of the best critics have been so infatuated with their beauties, especially with regard to poetry, that they have made rules of their very faults, for the moderns to err by*. In short, my opinion of human learning is, that it has made the mind of man like an overgrown child; which, by being trammelled too long in leading-strings, and paced up and down thro' the regular alleys of a parterre, is deprived of that strength and activity, which a free and unbounded exercise, thro' the fields of nature, might make it capable of arriving at — And here I must remind you of my scheme of a college, mentioned to you some time ago: for, if a set of students could possibly be improved in the contemplation of truth and nature, without the least bias or tincture of modern knowledge or learning, it is impossible to say to what a height the mind of man is capable of attaining.

I am, my dearest Fanny,
Your sincere

AUTOMATHES.

Send me the poem you promised me, by the return of the post.

* Catachresis, Antithesis, Enallage, Paronomasia, Pleonasm, cum multis, both in rhetoric and grammar.

————— incerta hæc si tu postules

Rationes certa facere, nihilo plus agas,

Quàm si des operam, ut cum ratione insanias. TER,

LETTER CXL.

Dear HARRY,

I SAID I would write by this post, and, in order to fulfill my promise, have taken up the pen; but find that it is not in my power to write any thing but words; for my thoughts are so much dissipated by the continual hurry I have been in, since I saw you, that it would require, at least, a week's solitude, to reduce them to any kind of form; unless I were to send you a little journal, and, by that means, treat only of the subject I dislike most, I know no other that I could think of, while I wrote three words,—*Love* and *you* excepted.—But ye indeed are one, at least in my idea: and tho' that is a theme, to which my thoughts for ever could attend, yet, as they are not capable of change, and have already spoke all the dear, inspiring subject could suggest, I need only refer to your memory, for all the sentiments of my heart, past, present, and to come.

As I never was happy enough to be able to give my opinion from experience, on the subject of parental affection, I shall not venture to give it at all, for more reasons than one, as it unfortunately differs from your's.

To my great surprize, the postman has, this instant, brought me yours from Maidenhall.—Had it been a letter, on which my happiness depended, it would have met the same delay; I am so heartily provoked, I could almost swear.

I am sincerely glad to hear that your dear Maidenhall, and dearer self, have not received any injury from the fierce rage of Borcas. We have dismal accounts from most parts of the kingdom. No certain tidings of the yacht—it is in general believed safe, tho' not supposed to have escaped the
the

110 LETTERS *between*

the storm. I am very sorry for the *Depopulation* of Dunmore-park: I think I may be allowed the expression, as supposing an hamadryad the inhabitant of each tree. I think the subject would admit of a very pretty pastoral elegy.

I thank you for your very elegant dissertation on learning. I have the honour to be so much of your's and Montaigne's opinion, that it is impossible for me to say any thing on the subject.—You must excuse my not sending the little poem, you desired this post; but, to make you amends, I send you a much better * thing inclosed.

I beg to hear from you continually, and am.

Your own

FRANCES.

LETTER CXLI.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED the song of Palma's, and do not think there is any thing in the tune, any more than the words; so far they are adapted to each other. It would be an easy task to improve the thought in a stanza more, but then it would not serve for the same tune, for the whole address of the composer was to suit proper musick to the words, "Laugh,"—and—"cry;" therefore, unless the same words were repeated in the next verse, the sound, to use a bold expression, would be errant nonsense.

My sentiments about natural affection do not proceed, you believe me, from a *Stoical* philosophy, or the want of an humane disposition; perhaps, few people feel more of tenderness in their hearts, than I do, and, from a certain softness in my

* A song of Palma's.

nature.

nature, tho' I have not the appearance of it in my manners, I often experience a fond temper for other people's children, which sometimes their parents are insensible of. Therefore the arguments, I amused the time with, in the letter you mention, proceeded merely from a certain method, I have always put in practice, ever since I ventured to think for myself, which was, never to take any opinion, or dogma, upon the common received notions of the world, or the *ipse dixit* of the schools, without first making it pass thro' the scrutiny of sense and reason; which is the surest way of allowing the full value to every virtue or quality in human nature.

Besides, I am jealous for the honour or dignity of man; and would endeavour to rescue every thing from instinct, which can be attributed to reflection, or benevolence. I think too, that the doctrine of natural affection has often had several very bad consequences attending it; in making many children, depending on that prejudice, behave themselves more unworthily toward their parents, than they would venture to do to their patrons; and many fathers have left immense fortunes to graceless sons, from this mistake, while they have left an honest servant, or valuable friend, unrewarded.

I expected a good deal from you upon the subject of my late letters; or, what was better, something relating to yourself; but your apologies put me in mind of what was said by a surly courtier to king William, that king Charles refused a favour with a better grace than he granted one.

I have often in conversation, in reading to you, and by letter, endeavoured to lead you into subjects of some intricacy, or depth, in order to make you experience your own genius, and be sensible of your strength; and, tho' you are sometimes too cowardly,

cowardly to engage, yet your slight touches and irregular essays are like the tuning of an instrument by a masterly hand, which has something more pleasing to a good ear, than the regular performance of a middling one.

“ Like Shakespear, Fancy’s sweetest child,
 “ Warbling his native wood notes wild.”

LETTER CXLII.

DEAR HARRY,

I AM sorry the song did not please you ; but, as I have not the *misfortune* to be a connoisseur, I like it mightily. I am not overburthened with knowledge of any kind, and yet I sincerely wish I had less ; as the little I have serves more to improve my folly, than reason, by giving me a general distrelish to most things that I understand. For instance,—let the words and musick of a song be, like that I sent you, equally bad, and I shall be disgusted with the words, and pleased with the tune ; when, perhaps, if I understood musick, even as well as I do poetry, I should not have received any pleasure from either. Query, could my understanding crotchets and quavers, make me amends for robbing me of half an hour’s entertainment ?

Your sentiments on natural affection, may, for aught I know, be perfectly right ; but I think it is vastly more to the honour of human nature, to suppose, that our virtues are innate, (which is but another name for instinct) than acquired ; and it is to me quite certain, that this particularly must proceed from honest instinct ; for the very utmost effect, which can arise from reflection in this case,

is

is not to make us feel, but act, as if we felt, the natural touch.

I am quite sensible of my own incapacity to engage on any topick with you, and, if ever I venture to give my opinion on subjects, that I neither am, nor ever shall be mistress of, it must be owing to a strong reliance on your indulgence, and to the pleasure I always took in having you for a preceptor. There is a kind of pride in receiving instruction from the man I love, which compensates for the mortification of being ignorant. For these reasons, I think your sarcasm rather severe, than just: for, were I even a greater fool than I am, it would be cruel to condemn me for being so, while I make no claim to sense or knowledge; but you are welcome to say what you please; nor am I ~~angry at your being witty.~~ There is yet another reason, which I may offer, in defence of my cowardice; and is, perhaps, the most valid of any, —the continual hurry I have been in, ever since you left town. While you was here, I neither saw nor went to see any creature; of course, had not only many visits, but apologies to make; and these, joined to more business than ever I was engaged in, with a thousand perplexing circumstances, have left me hardly time to eat or sleep. I have fretted myself to death; perhaps, for want of that philosophy, and calm composure, which you have so happily acquired.

I am, this moment, going to dine with lady O—: I have spent much of my time with her, since I saw you; she is indeed a true practical philosopher; her life and manners furnish as noble a lesson, as any to be found in the volumes of Socrates or Plato;—yet not even her prevailing example, nor all the little arguments, which my distracted thoughts can muster, have been able to reduce my mind, even to its wonted calm. But I flatter myself,

self, that a few days, by putting an end to some part of my anxiety, will abate my uneasiness; and, for the rest, time and time only must be my physician.

I again earnestly intreat, that you write to me much, and often: you cannot conceive the pleasure I receive from your letters; nor the mortification your missing a post gives me. Adieu, my heart's dear Harry! I am, and ever shall be sincerely and affectionately,

Your's.

P. S. You have got a very sprightly correspondent, if one may judge of her letter, by her countenance; for she sits by me writing, and smiling without ceasing.

LETTER CXLIII.

My dearest FANNY,

I CANNOT give up to you the point about natural affection, tho' you have disputed it closely with me. You say reflection cannot make us feel, tho' it may make us act as if we did, which is extremely just; therefore I did not make reflection the cause of this feeling, but habit; which, I said, steals so imperceptibly upon us, that we mistake it for nature; and it is so near it, that it is called a second nature.

I cannot think, with you, that the substituting innate ideas, instead of reason and reflection, would be more for the honour of human nature, tho' perhaps it would be for the dignity of it; as a weak made perfect is more valuable than a work to be perfected: the dignity lying in the simple nature of a thing, but the honour in the perfection of it. And surely Socrates, reformed from vice, or passion,

passion, by the force of philosophy, is a nobler subject for the honour of mankind, than Diogenes, who was said never to have been addicted or inclined to any humour, except that of railing. It was from this way of thinking, that I said something to you in my last letter, which, I am afraid, has given you some offence. I considered you as a work, capable of perfection, in order to rouse you to exert yourself. I said, I often tempted you to try your strength, or sound your depth: was this sarcasm, to allow you both strength and depth? in short, let this reflection always prevent any mistake of this kind for the future, that I love you so sincerely, and like you so extremely, that I can never think, or mean any thing, which might give you offence: and, whenever I say or do any thing, which you feel yourself picqued at, you may reprehend my manners, which are, I confess, liable to censure: but blame not my sentiments, which are faultless, with regard to you.

I did attribute your not writing, to the hurry of business; and would have wrote to you last post, but for fear of pressing you too much, at this time; as the fatigue of writing constantly must be too much for you, unless you had more retired leisure; therefore, I will not be so exact with you for the future. I will write to you every post, and if you answer two, three, or four of my letters at once, I shall be satisfied; being well convinced that you will not neglect it, on account of any employment more pleasant, but from business more necessary. This is what I have refused you, ever since we were correspondents; but have thought, at last, that taking off the constraint of a regular correspondence would give a freer air and brisker spirit to it. The first favoured of duty, this of love.—

I am, my dearest Fanny,

Your's only.

One letter is wanting, which this also answers.

LETTER CXLIV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THE story I hinted to you, in a late letter, was, in great measure, the cause of the excessive lowness of spirits, you chide me for. I am mortified at the insincerity and ingratitude of some people, on whom I had a strong dependence; particularly, Lady ———; her vehement professions, and contemptible behaviour have served to illustrate my real opinion, that sense and virtue are the only solid foundation for love and friendship. I am absolutely amazed, and angry at myself, for being duped by such a woman.

But, in order to set her behaviour in a much stronger light, I have, in my acquaintance with Lady O——, found such a contrast, as is not to be described. Instead of an affectation of sense and virtue in the one, the actions of the other speak the full force of both; dignity, without pride; good humour, without folly; wit, without satire; charity, without ostentation; and philosophy, with the extremest quickness of understanding, and tenderness of heart, are all joined in the amiable composition of that unaffectedly good woman.

Just as I had finished the last line, her chair came for me: I have been with her three hours, and would not have quitted her now, for any other pleasure, but that of returning to my dear Harry.

She has indeed calmed my mind extremely, by that just method of reasoning, she is perfectly mistress of. I hope my dear Harry will excuse my dwelling so long on a subject my heart is so much interested in, as it overflows with gratitude to one, who will not even suffer an attempt to express it.

My sincerest thanks are your's, for consenting lately to my so-often-repeated request; you may indeed be satisfied, that no avocation more pleasant will ever interfere with my part of our correspondence; assured of this, that I would give up every thing, that is called pleasure in this world, for the real one I enjoy in conversing with you—Oh! when shall I have that happiness without alloy?—

I was not picqued at your not supposing me capable of entering the lists of logick with you, but at your seeming to gibe at my want of capacity; which, you know, is a misfortune, and not a fault. You say, you “did not mean it so.”—I believe it, first, because you say it; and next, because I am too low-spirited to be angry, if you had meant to make me so.

Perhaps, my present dejection is the cause of my fancying myself in a bad state of health; but, from a cough, which has never left me since you did, and a continued pain across my chest, I imagine myself going into a consumption. I sincerely hope I am mistaken; for, indeed, I do not wish to part with thee. I intend consulting Doctor Barry; when I do, you shall know his opinion. 'Till then, and ever, be assured, the bitterness of death hath not a pang, but what the loss of thee will give. I find myself possessed with such a gloomy tenderness, as you, certainly, will be angry at.—Oh! my heart's treasure, forgive that selfish weakness, which laments thy absence; for joy and thou are one!

For heaven's sake, burn this letter. I am strongly tempted to write another; but, if I should, perhaps it would be as foolish,—so e'en let it go!

I should complain of your having wrote oftener to Kitty than me; and, by that means, seeming more anxious about the business of her fortunes, than my happiness; but, by making an apology,

you have acknowledged a fault; which is all I ever required, to render my forgiveness absolute.

Adieu! my dearest, best-loved, first, and only friend! may that happiness, which I think you merit, and sincerely wish you, ever attend you!

FRANCES.

* L E T T E R CXLV.

Dear FANNY,

I AM heartily sorry for the disappointments and mortifications you have met with; but I have known the lady's character you mention, so long, that I am very sure I shall never be surprized at any thing she does; for I dare swear she will never grow good. Lady O——'s character you need not put in contrast, to make it greatly esteemed.

I am concerned at the account you give of your health; and cannot say, I hope that it is only your spleen, which makes you fancy yourself unwell; because I think imaginary ills worse, for the present, and more difficult to be cured, than real ones. I hope to find you soon better, than you believe yourself to be.

Adieu!

* This letter was part of No. CXLIV, in the former edition; but the transcriber had made a blunder there; he joined two letters, of different dates, in one. They were two very short ones, and he thought it better to tack them together, by way of an eke, without having regard to the series. He had heard, that two *books* make an *whole*; but allowed no exception for heterogeneous parts.

Here is an *Hiatus*, tho' the first paragraph seems to answer letter last but two.

L E T T E R CXLVI.

MY dear Harry's promised indulgence shall not make me less solicitous to express the pleasure I receive from his charming correspondence, than if I imagined that my thanks were to be the purchase of that pleasure. I confess that, from the first, I have been incapable of making any other return, and now find myself, if possible, less capable than ever; for, as the value of your letters increases every day, or, at least, my esteem for them, conscious as I am of their worth, it would appear a high proof of confidence in me, to attempt any thing more, than bare acknowledgments. Accept then, my dearest love, of the warmest gratitude, which that heart, you first taught to feel, and that understanding, you alone have fashioned, is capable of bestowing; and let my sensibility of *your* merit, excuse the want of it in *me*.

I have not, since you left town, had leisure to read a page in Montaigne, or any other author. I have indeed passed thro' such a series of hurry, disquiet, and fatigue, that I am more than half dead; it is not to be told how much I am changed by it; but I flatter myself, that the pleasure of seeing you, and the hopes I have of enjoying peace and content in the country, will restore me to myself, or something better.

I am still in the same disagreeable way, with regard to my health;——perhaps, I am vapourish, and fancy myself worse than I really am.

I saw —— this day, he says your cough still continues;——for heaven's sake, how can you be

so excessively ill-natured, as not to take some care of yourself? You must, on this occasion, give me leave to remind you of that noblest part of Seneca's Philosophy, which your favourite author mentions:

——“He that loves not his wife, or friend, so well, as to prolong his health for them, but will obstinately die, is too delicate and effeminate; the soul must impose this on itself, when the utility of our friends does so require it; it is a testimony of grandeur and courage, to preserve one's life, for the consideration of another, when a man perceives that this office is pleasing, agreeable, or useful to some person, by whom we are tenderly beloved.”

Taking this for granted, what judgment am I to form of your affection for me, who have so earnestly solicited you to apply the proper means for surmounting that nasty, obstinate, ill-natured cough? If it were only from a desire of conquering any thing so perverse, I would get the better of it. I hope this consideration will have more weight, than any other I have been able to offer; for, alas! “my advocacy is not now in tune.”

The pain in my chest is so extreme, that I am not able to stoop longer. —Adieu, then, my dearest Harry!

I am, as I never shall cease to be,

Faithfully and affectionately your's,

FRANCES.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R CXLVI.

My dear FANNY,

April 28, 1754.

THE irksomeness of our separation needs not the addition of your repinings. It is said, that all unhappiness is lessened by participation; but your complaints double mine. My philosophy is prepared for any misfortune, which falls on me alone; but I feel its natural weight tenfold, when rebounded from you.

Your apprehension that absence may, in time, create indifference, may be true of human nature in general, but I think my mind is particularly framed; for all the effect I am sensible of, is, what slaves feel, when they attempt to part.— For distance in love but stretches the chain, to make me perceive the alliance more strongly.

You can be in no danger from my inconstancy, if what a French wit has said be true; that “Absence to lovers, like wind to the fire, extinguishes a small flame, but increases a great one.”

However, to shew you I do not mean, as Shakspeare has beautifully expressed it, “to patch up grief with proverbs,” I shall be in town on the 10th of next month; and believe me, that nothing but the exigency of my affairs prevents me that pleasure sooner.

HENRY.

LETTER CXLVIII.

My dear FANNY,

I REACHED this place without stopping, which is above half my journey.

After dinner I finished Montaigne's long Essay on Raymond de Sebonde, or rather intitled, his Apology for Raymond de Sebonde; for a very little portion of it relates to that author. As you design soon to read it, I shall give you some criticisms by the way, which, as they can be no way necessary for you, I do only to shew you that I read not for my own improvement alone, but for your amusement also.

About the beginning of the Essay, he says, speaking of the new doctrines of Luther, that by staggering our belief, they were likely to run us into atheism. See the whole passage at large. Now this argument is bad, by proving too much; for it is equally strong to support all religions; nay, the errors too of all religions. But the christian religion is the only true one.—Shall we not prune away the errors and mistakes, which the frailty of man has ingrafted on it, for fear of hurting the root? Must truth then avail itself of falshood, and must the imperfections of man be sanctified by the perfection of God? Let a man first be convinced of the truth and reason of any doctrine, and then let him boldly speak out, even in religion itself; nay, more freely there, for truth cannot contradict truth; and religion is our greatest concern here, as it must necessarily be our greatest hereafter. The christian religion is indeed founded, and very properly so, upon faith; and the strongest reasons, next to demonstration, for the belief. But all its doctrines are, and ought to be, founded on reason—therefore subject to disquisition. I am
extremely

extremely provoked at those, who justify the superstitions and impositions of the priests, under the plausible title of *pious frauds*; which, with more justice, I stile *impious falsehoods*. Must truth then avail itself of error, &c.? for I think it blasphemy to affirm any thing under the sanction of religion, which is not of divine authority; either from reason, which is the deity within, or revelation, its manifestation without. If Montaigne's reasoning is just, it was so from the beginning; and must consequently have overlaid the christian religion in its birth. His whole argument, upon this passage, might be shewn to be extremely weak, but that I should think it a weakness to confute him. However, it is not owing to any want of sense or judgment in the author, but to a certain laziness in his disposition, which did not suffer him to examine closely his own opinions; but, after the manner of an old man, of which all his writings are full, found it easier to talk than think.

After his wild manner he hops away, and flies into an Essay about the Rationality of Brutes. If the schoolmen will not allow me this expression, by tying me down to a certain definition, I shall only answer them, by quoting a criticism of Addison's upon Pope's Eclogues; that, if they are not pastorals, they are something better. I think he has offered a great many very bold and clever arguments on this subject; which, tho' they do not prove the matter, do, at least, put it out of the power of those who deny it, to prove the contrary. His whole design, thro' the essay, is, by shewing the insufficiency of human understanding, to recommend to us our dependence upon faith; and, tho' there are few people who are more inclined to a free and canvassed disquisition of all matters, even the most sacred, and most general received opinions, than I have always been,

yet the arguments of Montaigne, deduced from the writings of the wisest of the ancient and modern philosophers, have indeed put me out of conceit with the vain imaginations, and presumptuous reasonings of human understanding.

It was said by some writer, that the being of a God was so far from a matter of doubt, that it was the only thing of which we could be certain. The essay we are upon, furnishes sufficient arguments to prove, how doubtful our knowledge is in every thing else, which resolves all science into faith. The highest philosophy cannot give us certainty on the most trifling subjects; if therefore we know any thing certainly, it must be from supernatural aid.

The whole essay would be properly classed, by being bound up with the * *Moriæ Encomium* of Erasmus; only with this difference, that Montaigne is in earnest, and Erasmus in jest. But I like my author best, because his is a philosophical essay; the other, only an humorous satire.

Adieu!

H I A T U S.

LETTER CXLIX.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED your laconic epistle, which I could wish had been still shorter, as far as it mentions your being ill. I am myself a little unwell, from drinking these three days past; and it must be a very irksome reflection, not to be able to recollect any one enjoyment, of which my present pain was the purchase; for drinking, in general,

angyrick on Folly.

you.

you know I hate; and yet I would rather have drank alone, than in the company I debauched with. Do not think me conceited in this speech, for I really look upon it rather as an imperfection than a refinement, that so few people are agreeable to my taste; as it is the sign of a depraved appetite, not to be able to relish plain and simple meats. The men of half, or quarter understandings, disgust me most; and mere fools I can live tolerably well with, provided they be good humoured; tho' a good humoured fool may be compared to a fine day in winter, which keeps us all the while in pain with the fear of losing it, as it has not a *season* to support it. It is sense alone, which can give constancy to cheerfulness or virtue.

My dislike to company is a good deal owing to a certain splenetick cast of mind, which I have contracted from some mortifications and disappointments; I have formerly met with, joined to some uneasinesses, I at present labour under; which evil habit, as I am well aware of, I shall endeavour to get the better of, as fast as possible: For, should I suffer such a humour as this to grow upon me, it might render me incapable of enjoying the favours, which, perhaps, fortune has in store for me; and would be as absurd, as unmanning one's self, upon being crossed in love.*

You have, my charming girl, a good deal to answer for, with regard to my dislike of conversation, in general; and are likely to increase the evil every day: For your taste and understanding improve constantly, or, to speak more properly, are more illustrated: For I believe that, in proportion as my sense improves, or taste refines, I may be said rather to discover new beauties, than you to acquire them. Here I shall observe to you, what you have some-

* Durate, et vosmet rebus fervate secundis.

times upbraided me with, that I did not seem to increase in my love for you from the first time I declared my regards. Which observation is true enough ; for my love was perfect, at first, as I esteemed and valued you, not only for what you then were, but by a præ-sentiment for what you would be. Like a skilful lapidary, I valued the jewel in the stone ; thinking the polishing could add but an inconsiderable value to intrinsic worth.

Adieu !

HENRY.

LETTER CL.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I DO not believe there are any words, that can possibly describe the situation of my mind : I think, I want but a small matter to render me as incapable of feeling, as I am of expressing it ; but as I, “ even in madness, love thee,” my heart received a momentary calm from your dear letter ; and, “ for a while, forgot the approach of Cæsar.” You, doubtless, expect that I should assign some reason for the extraordinary emotion I have mentioned, but it arises from such a multiplicity of odd circumstances, that it would be impossible for me even to recollect the thousandth part of them. In short, my memory, tho’ contrary to your opinion, accompanied what little understanding I had, and they are both marched off together. Whoever finds, may take them for their pains, I should be ashamed to claim them. There is nobody doubts the mind’s suffering with the body ; and I positively affirm, that the body returns the compliment ; for I am, at this instant, so extremely ill, and tremble so violently, that I can hardly hold the pen. And it

is more than probable I should have enjoyed a moderate share of health, if my mind had not been hurt and harrassed.

Any person of sense or taste, who has ever had the happiness of conversing with you, can easily account for your general dislike to what is called conversation; and what is still worse, you are the cause of this dislike in others. For my part, I have often lamented, on this account, that we were ever acquainted; for, as by a fatal necessity, we are obliged to pass so much of our time asunder, the little we spend together hardly compensates for passing the greatest part of my life in a strong contempt, or, at best, insipid, tasteless apathy to every thing I hear or see.——As we are on this topic, I will venture to say, what to any body else who did not know me very well, would appear vastly impertinent, and vain,——that I have often, in the company of fools, been ashamed to give any proofs of the little understanding which providence has blest me with; and have left a parcel of idiots thoroughly satisfied, that I was, by many degrees, sillier than any of the set.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

H I A T U S.

L E T T E R C L I.

My dear HELOISE,

THAT I have shewn you any beauties in your poem, which you observed not before, is owing to the eye not seeing itself, but by reflection; and, like a mirror, 'have but barely *reported* the form, not capable of improving it: But I have this advantage in the simile, that the substance of your dear image shall always remain with me, tho' the shadow of it should be vanished.

“ ——— As learned commentators view

“ More things in Homer, than e’er Homer knew.”

So it is the character of all persons of genius to say things, the beauties of which they were not aware of: For, as all truth, harmony, and order are but the expressions of the innate ideas of a perfect mind; it is natural for the human soul, exerted to its proper force, to hint, unconscious, at science or philosophy, which it had never learned or thought of. The utmost of my art can but explain your wit or sense, not improve them; and, as indeed you have more of both, than it is possible your youth and inexperience should have skill enough to find out, it shall be henceforth my pleasing task to make that *mine* current; which * shines by use, and; like other treasures, increases by communication.

I do not recollect what lines of mine you hint at; if you mention them more particularly, I shall send them, to shew my obedience, even after your’s.

I am still in the same study of Montaigne, and have begun him again, in the old edition I had formerly by me; as, perhaps, that may give me light into some passages, which are very obscurely translated in the new one; and the press of this is also the most imperfect I ever saw of any book. The errors, which the sense can set you right in, are not material; but there are some very unlucky ones, which lead you quite astray from the subject; as, particularly, *unite* for *un’ye*, &c. &c. which I mention to put you on your guard, as you go thro’ it.

I declare, I never received more pleasure or satisfaction from any author, in my life, than this. He has a thorough knowledge of the world and human nature, and more wit than all the epigrams which were ever wrote; and many poetical flights, which the best verse, I ever read, might be proud to own.

* Splendat usu

HOR.

He

He has a sense, which I am fond of, more improved by thought and reflection, than study or learning; an understanding free from prejudice, and a judgment formed from a natural discernment, and not framed upon the doctrines or opinions of others.

His sentiments are every-where just and noble, and there is a certain freedom in his stile, and boldness in his expression, which are strong enough to break even thro' both his translators. As for what I have heard some small critics cavil at, that he is always talking of himself, is it improper to speak about what he professedly makes his subject? He treats of human nature in general,—then himself ought to be his particular study: What he says of others, he can only guess at, but what he says of himself, he may be sure of. He speaks often too grossly, it is said; and it is certain he does,—but then the freedom of his descriptions, and expressions in those passages, are only shocking to those to whom the study of anatomy would be obscene. In short, I highly esteem his writings, and greatly honour his memory,

In his short essay upon monstrous births, which I read over this morning, he makes a very fine observation, which has amused me greatly,——that, perhaps, what we look upon as monsters, may not be really so in the eye of Providence; for nothing can be contrary to nature, unless we mistake custom, as I have said before is often done, for nature; and these *beteroclite* creatures may, perhaps, have relation to a species of the same kind, unknown to man. I am particularly pleased with this philosophick turn of thought, as it takes off greatly from the offence, which such *obscene* sights naturally,——I mean, usually give us. This sentiment I shall extend farther, with relation to those extraordinary spirits in virtue, or science, who seem to excel mankind, as if they were of a higher species, and may, perhaps, have

have relation to a nobler rank of beings ; but sent down a class, or more, lower, for some offence in their former state ; and obliged to earn their way up again to their lost dignity ; according to a discipline, I somewhere read of and was pleased with, in an army, where the greatest officer, upon any error, or breach of his duty, was degraded to some inferior station, according to his fault, and so reduced to fight his way back again to his forfeited rank. Or, perhaps, these rare Genii are now and then dropped among us, to raise our emulation in virtue or knowledge ; or, it may be, to hint to us mortals, that the ordinary race of man is not the greatest work of God ; which, however, a very little reflection upon Providence might convince us of ; for God, as it has been elsewhere observed, all-powerful, may not rest at a creature so imperfect as man.

Farewel, my dear Heloise ! and believe me
your faithful ABELARD.

LETTER CLII.

Dear HARRY,

I HAVE observed since you left town, that the letters, which have passed between us, have not had the least air of a correspondence. Your's, indeed, are infinitely superior to any thing I have ever seen under that denomination, being regular finished essays ; while mine have been mere acknowledgements for the receipt of such a treasure. And if, at any time, I have chanced to vary from the usual form, and given expression to my own thoughts, which are only filled with tenderness for you, you have not deigned to take the least notice of them. To illustrate this truth, can any thing be more extraordinary, than your addressing your answer, to the most important concern of my life,
to

to Kitty; yet write to me by the same post, without ever mentioning it? However, the means cannot rob me of the pleasure I take in knowing you are well.

Whatever effect spleen may have on my mind, I do assure you, my body, without that, is much disordered: But I hope every thing from clear air, regularity, and content; none of which I have the least expectation of enjoying in Dublin, tho' I believe I shall not go above five or six miles from it, in pursuit of them all. My scheme, with regard to Westmeath, is quite changed,—but more of this when we meet. You flatter me with the hopes of seeing you—Do you really think of coming? Tell me, and when?

Mr. and Mrs. — have left town. Mr. — goes to England next Monday: I am just going to bid him adieu. Indeed I shall be the most disconsolate of all mortals, left among those, who serve only to debar me of the pleasure of solitude, and remind me of the absence of them I love. I detest going abroad, yet must be obliged to it, and it will be impossible to bear home without a companion, or the liberty of reading: Which last, should I attempt, would not only be impracticable, but explained into an act of the highest disregard and ingratitude, by my aunt.—Is not this a pleasant situation!

I have read six or seven chapters of Montaigne; but, as I read regularly, am not come to that you lately mentioned. I like him vastly, and have a kind of pleasure in recalling the ideas he inspired me with some years ago. I am ashamed, and sorry to tell you, that I think my understanding and judgment were infinitely superior, even in my childish days, to what they are at present. I can only account for it by my thoughts being more dissipated, and eagerly engaged in a variety of pursuits, than they then were;

were : And there being, at first, but a slight foundation, it was intirely destroyed in the division. I will not expatiate farther on those merits, which, as I no longer possess them, may appear to you quite imaginary ; but shall build all my hopes of your regard on *one*, which neither time nor chance can alter — that of being sincerely and affectionately

Your's.

L E T T E R CLIII.

Belmont.

HOW could you take me to task so unfairly as you did, about my carelessness, with regard to your inquiries? Recollect yourself of my letter to Kitty, you'll find, when I had sealed mine to you, that post, George brought me your letter from ——. I was then writing to Kitty about business, and I thought the account of my health would come as quickly to you by a paragraph in her letter, as if I had broke open a seal, to inform you of it in your's. This would have been such a piece of formality as I would be very sorry we were upon terms to require. As for the critical and philosophical subjects of my letters: which you so genteely reprimand, let me make this apology for them: That they never once diverted me from answering, and observing upon every single paragraph of your letters; and I only essay my own fund, when I have nothing better to comment upon.

Your observation upon disagreeable company is very pretty, and just. They destroy the pleasures of solitude, but leave us the irksome part of it; which is, the remembrance of our absent friends; and this too in a stronger manner than when alone, by affording us an opportunity of comparison. I am sure you make a provoking comparison between your

your former and present understanding; and the reason that you thought better of the first, was, because it was the weakest. Our humility increases in proportion to our sense and knowledge. A person in a valley is insensible of the narrow circumference of his sight; but mounting up the hill, the extent of prospect betrays the short limits of that sense. If you will rest your opinion upon my judgment in this matter, be assured that I never said any thing either of your sense, wit, taste, or other merits, that I did not really think to the full extent of the letter.

I am, my dearest Fanny, your's,

Au pied du lettre.

HIATUS.

LETTER CLIV.

Dear FANNY,

THE lines you desire, are not worth sending; but to write good verses is one thing, and to obey is another; so, according to your commands, take what follows.

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A vile phrase, and worse matter; but both preferable to the subject. I suspect these were not the lines you enquired for; and fancy those wrote in a young lady's prayer-book, were what you meant; tho' I believe I gave you them before. They had
 some

some spirit in them, but alluded to secret history so much, that they could not be understood without a comment, which I shall never give.

Let us now proceed to prose, for I look upon verse, I mean rhyme, to be such a device for reading or writing, as the jingling bells which carters use, that are supposed to encourage their brutes to labour with more chearfulness; and I shall ever honour that critick, in the class of false taste, who said that Milton wanted only the ornament of rhyme, to render him perfect. Such a genius would cut all the trees of a forest into pyramids, and fashion mount Athos into the figure of a man; as was projected once by Alexander, and shew the power of art, by it's violence upon nature.

To give you my opinion of rhyme, I look upon puns to be a species of it, as they are a jingling of words, and a tinkling of sounds. Indeed, those, who can write like you, may be excused, where the real beauties of poetry render the reader insensible to the crambo; but then this apology is such a one, as is made for the quibbling of Shakespear, that the false relish of the age required such a condescension. You use verse as you do cloaths; not for the ornament, but in compliance to custom; not because you have one blemish to cover, but because you can afford to hide many beauties.

I left Belmont this morning, not that I had finished my business there, but because I had read out the only book I had with me; and was then exposed to the mercy of the winds and rains, which have been very severe there this week.

The only fault I find in Montaigne, is the profusion of quotations he intersperses thro' all his works. It is necessary sometimes to illustrate our reasonings by examples; but these should be drawn from our own observations, rather than the sentiments
of

of others. When we treat of Death, Immortality, &c. why need we produce the opinions of Plato, or Seneca, upon these subjects? We dare not depend on our own strength, but lean upon others, and often support weak judgments by the force of authority. This is one of the reasons we make such slow progress, of late, in science or philosophy; for we follow one another in such beaten tracks, that our view cannot be extended farther than to the person, who goes before us; and are afraid of turning to the right, or left, lest we should lose our way. I am so dissatisfied with quotations, that I run into the contrary extreme, and endeavour to avoid them, as much as others do to bring them in; insomuch that I often shun the very thoughts, which naturally occur to me in writing or speaking, if I recollect they have been made use of, upon the same occasion before. This is, perhaps, an affectation greater than the other; and may fall under the censure objected to writings of this kind, that those, who will not condescend to say any thing, which has been said before them; will probably never say any thing, which will be quoted after them. But this last nicety, perhaps, I owe to my correspondence with you, lest I should be suspected of plagiarism; as you have read every thing, which I am capable of understanding; yet I have a more humble reason for avoiding quotations; that I don't care to give people an opportunity of making comparisons to my disadvantage.

There is a passage in Montaigne, which I am particularly flattered with, because it puts me in mind of a bold expression and sentiment of mine, in a former letter to you*; "that I had so complete a possession of you, that I enjoyed your very absence," or words to that purpose. Speaking

* Letter XCIII.

of a friend, he loved, he says, "A † correspondent
 " destroys absence, as it gives us a liberty of con-
 " versing together. We better filled, and extended
 " the possession of life, in being parted. He lived,
 " rejoiced, and saw for me, and I for him, as plainly
 " as if he had himself been there. One part re-
 " mained idle, and we confounded one another,
 " when we were together. Distance of place ren-
 " dered the conjunction of our wills more rich.
 " The insatiable desire of personal presence, some-
 " what implies weakness in the fruition of souls." Nothing can be more finely imagined, or better expressed, than this whole passage; after which, I will not venture to add any thing of my own, but conclude in his words; "While *natural conveniences*
 " fail, let us supply the defect with those that are
 " artificial!"

Farewel, my love, my friend!

HENRY.

† Writing relieves absence: it is an extraordinary thing, that the very action which marks it most, should make us feel it least.

Henry.

HIATUS.

LETTER CLV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THOUGH I have been, ever since I came to town, overwhelmed with business, I cannot say that I am displeased at this *embarras du monde*, as it prevents my having leisure to indulge gloomy reflections, which are the certain consequence of indolence and inactivity: And, though my spirits are too weak to bear much fatigue, I would prefer the most laborious life to the melancholy hours I some-
 times

times pass; not for want of employment, but resolution to employ myself.

I am, however, far from being satisfied with my present condition; for I, almost hourly, find the want of a reasonable companion; who, by participating in my concerns, or approving my actions, would double my assiduity, and, of course, my success. And this leads me to mention two things I have often thought of—First, Providence certainly designed us social creatures; and that our greatest happiness on earth, and strongest pursuit, is the enjoyment of a rational and tender friendship; which cannot be attained without devoting the greatest and best part of our lives to this single purpose; for I am thoroughly convinced, that sincere love, or real friendship, never was contracted after the age of forty: The mind then takes another turn, grows callous to the tender, soft impressions of humanity, and is in pursuit of enjoyments directly opposite to those, the first, and best—unless before engaged in the dear ties of husband, or of friend; if so, each day adds strength to the blest union, and steals the sting from sorrow and from care. Can we then, my dearest life, without arraigning the goodness and wisdom of the divine Being, suppose that, from the highest excellence of our nature, we should be engaged in laudable pursuits, which are to take up the best and happiest part of our lives; and that, after having been at innumerable pains to obtain them, the enjoyment should cease, just when we are capable of it, by putting off this frail mortality? No—it cannot be! With thee I'll range the liquid fields of air, wander through all the immensity of bliss, and find none equal to thy dear society; so fix my heaven there.

I grow quite an enthusiast on this subject; and, of course, talk an infinite deal of nonsense; but sure you will excuse me, when I solemnly declare, I have

no idea of happiness, either of this world or the next, unshared by thee.

The second thing I have to mention is, my surprise at your being able to live so long alone; "for, "in unequals, what society?" And sure you appear to me like Adam, before "the last and best "of all God's works" was formed; dignified with, and conscious of that superiority he felt, amidst his vassal brutes: Yet could equality alone render society agreeable to you, you must, indeed, condemn yourself to a perpetual solitude; for, in that case, I know not where it would be possible for you to find a companion.

I am but just come home from ——— My watch lies on the table, and points to twelve; so I must bid you a thousand times good-night.

FRANCES.

LETTER CLVI.*

My dear FANNY,

Belmont.

I SET off in Thursday's stage, the 25th instant; and beg you will get some lodging for me.

I received a letter from you on Saturday last, and another this day: And, first, of the first. I am very glad you got safe to town: But why all this plainness? Why will you eternally doubt my tenderness for you? Observe, that there is a childish, and a manly one: Perhaps I am a child in every thing else; and then one may suspect, if I do not appear so in this, it is because I want the feeling: But if you will allow me to be a man in other things, why will you not judge of me all together? If my letters and behaviour differ, it is because one proceeds from the sentiments I have toward you, and the other

* One of the letters which this answers is so¹.

from a certain nonchalance, or want of earnestness in my manners, which has been often misinterpreted.

What you say with regard to love and friendship is certainly just, as it is ingenious also. * The pleasures of those affections are the greatest enjoyments of life: How careful ought we then to be to cherish them in their proper season! which does not extend even so far as you mention: And yet we have a long life to labour through after that æra, which would lag heavily along without those helps.

The opinion of a continued converse after death has been often disputed, and by me too: But I will come over to your sentiment, for this conclusive reason; We are to be happy after death. Providence always acts by the most continued, uniform, and constant means. Love and friendship are the highest enjoyments of mortals: They are likewise in the series of virtue. Would it not be caprice in Providence, to give us new objects and strange affections, when we can be made as happy by the improvement of the former, as by the enjoyment of any other*? I will never change my opinion more on this subject, for your sake, my sweet girl, whose charms (pardon the quibble) I wish to enjoy, *both above and below*; and in that wish I live, and in that hope, I die,

Your's, all your's, and only your's.

HENRY.

* Hear what a great father of the church says upon this subject,

Certum est, beatos homines omnes ab omnibus videri et sciri, et inter se familiariter versari, ut amicos et proximos.

Bellarmin de æternâ felicitate.

LETTER CLVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Kilkenny.

I AM come so far on my way to Dublin, and shall be able to receive just one letter from you, before I leave it. My uncle is in the gout, which will not mend his temper; and the three women, I left behind me, are in a hopeful way with him, and he, of consequence, extremely unhappy with them; for Providence has ordered it's eternal laws so equitably, that whoever makes another unhappy by perverseness of temper makes himself no less so. I have more indulgence for great vices, than for this peevish unfociable humour, which men absurdly contract at that stage of life, when they stand most in need of all the friendly, amusing, * and social helps, to aid them through. The other vices have nature on their side, or allurements and temptations, to excuse them; but moroseness is contrary to nature, (who diffuses chearfulness among all her works) and is also a self-torment in the very exercise. As I have often said, I looked upon chearfulness to be an hymn to Providence, as well as a strong indication of a virtuous mind, so, I am almost bold to affirm, that ill-humour is blasphemy in the act, and a moral vice in the disposition: Nay, to prove it a vice, by the strict rules of logic, I affirm it to be a thing diametrically opposite to the nature of virtue; for, as that is it's own reward, this is it's own punishment.

It is observed by Addison, that few people have all the qualities requisite to render life agreeable: But there are two indispensably necessary, which

* Subjunctive sentence.

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are in every one's power; chearfulness and constancy. Now he who wants either of these, may be condemned; while those, who fall short in the gifts of nature, ought only to be pitied. Here it may be proper to say something in my own defence, who seem to labour under this rule, in *some people's* opinion; but observe there may be chearfulness without mirth, and constancy without professing.

I am, my dearest pet,

Your's sincerely,

HENRY.

LETTER CLVIII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Kilkenny.

IT may seem idle to write you a letter now, which you will get but a few hours before I see you; but I do it, perhaps, to shew you I have not so mean a consideration for you, as to save you a groat; though I am sure, as I have no letter of your's to answer, that I shall not be able to say any thing which can defray the expence.

Our assizes ended this day, by the execution of all the condemned; among whom was Roberts, a rogue of some consequence. When I heard the guards coming down the street, I retired to a back room, as it is not a spectacle I care to look on; but, considering it as an object which might give occasion to some useful reflections, I returned, and saw them pass by. The first thought which occurred to me was that I should be glad to have been, for some time, in their situation, out of curiosity, to know how a man feels, or imagines, in such shocking circumstances; for the mere description of any thing does not sufficiently satisfy me. I should be also glad, more parti-

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M

cularly,

cularly, to know how I should behave myself, upon such an occasion ; whether I should feel myself most concerned for my crime, or shocked at the punishment ; whether my hopes, thro' the merit of repentance, would be sufficient to support me through the terrors ; if the shame, or pain, would afflict me most ; whether I should act like a madman, or a fool ; and, lastly, whether I could have strength of mind sufficient to support that calm and philosophick temper at my death, which great part of my life has been laid out in endeavouring to attain. With regard to the wretches themselves, I had one comfortable reflection, which will henceforward take off greatly from the shock, which executions of this kind give to the humane mind : That few of such creatures ever reclaim of themselves ; but, proceeding in a series of iniquity, die without repentance. In this particular, the executed malefactor has a great advantage above the rogue who escapes. The condemned man has that benefit which the Psalmist prays for so emphatically : " Teach me, O Lord, so to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom !" And I think that the highest crimes, sincerely repented of, shall meet more favour in the next world, than lesser offences, unatoned by sorrow and contrition *. I shall pursue these gallows meditations no farther ; but only observe to you, the powerful effect of this great salvo of repentance, toward the perfect quietism of a mind, the least imbued with religion, though untutored by philosophy, in the instance of Roberts, this day ; who, just before he mounted the ladder, declared he would not change his present situation with any man in the world.

I am, my dearest Fanny,

Sincerely your's.

* I have heard an old expression upon some such reflection as the above, " That more souls go to Heaven from the gallows than the grave."

HIATUS.

LETTER CLIX.

Dear FANNY,

I AM alone here ; for my uncle is in the rheumatism again at ——. I want nothing, but you, to complete my happiness here. You cannot imagine the different sensations I have in this present vacation, from what I am sensible of, when I have peevish or difficult people to deal with. In short, peace is to the mind, what health is to the body, grace to religion, and chearfulness to virtue. Without these enlivening qualities, how dead and inactive are all their subjects ! Without them all, how poor an animal is man ! When endowed with them, what a noble and amiable creature ! The love of gods, and the emulating envy of angels ! Nay, how much more glorious is the state of a good man, than even angels themselves ! We suppose them, at first, made perfect, and guiltless to sin ; but mere man, by the power of his own virtue, can render himself equal to that perfection, which was, at once, the act of omnipotence, with regard to them. You see I lay hold on every fair occasion of raising the dignity of human nature above the disingenuous and unphilosophick sarcasms of Theophrastus, La Bruyere, Rochefoucault, Swift, and the tribe of authors of that stamp. Such *satirists* are unjustly stiled *moralists* ; which is the title they vainly arrogate to themselves.

I am, my dearest Fanny,

Impatiently your's.

LETTER CLX.

Dear FANNY,

I HAVE begun Orrery's Pliny, and, as I go thro' it, shall give you my criticisms, or rather observations upon it.

The translator, and his author, have this in common with each other : The fortune, or misfortune, just as it happens, of having had two wives ; but there is this difference between them, that no poet, or historian, has mentioned the Roman's first wife, nor has *he* even given us any character of her ; but lord Orrery has immortaliz'd his, in a note on the second volume, which I remember, you shewed me lately, and has also a pledge by her, which, if lord Boyle fulfils his early promises, will make her live again to the present times, as my lord has taken care she shall to all future. Perhaps Pliny, from a delicacy of sentiment, or cautiousness of manners, did not venture to pay any compliments to the memory of his first wife, during the life of the second ; but if he had had the address of his translator, he might have made an equal compliment to both ; and if he had the same reason for doing so, I should think his happiness equal even to his merits.

But though, after the manner of Plutarch, I draw a parallel between two great men of different nations, I do not insist so much upon this accidental likeness, as I do upon a natural one ; in which, from the text of one, and the comment of the other, I find an amiable resemblance, which is their noble sentiments of virtue, and their generous and humane dispositions toward mankind in general. To prove the likeness in a stronger instance, I shall observe, that lord Orrery is equal to a greater work than this translation ; but not being under the necessity of writing either for money, or fame, (fortune hav-

ing

ing saved him one, and his virtue the other, as the character of a good man is higher than that of an author) he was at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and the sympathy of honest minds attracted him to this particular work. I have observed, upon this occasion, something greatly to the advantage of the commentator; that Pliny, from his several and frequent, generous and enthusiastick remembrance of his particular friends, seems to rise from individuals to the whole; according to that much admired, but fanciful simile of Pope's, of a pebble thrown into a standing lake; but Orrery seems to take the sense of social love, in a nobler view, as his sentiments are more general on this head, and seem to begin at the outermost circle, which was the manner I used to reverse that simile, when you and I read or mentioned it together. Indeed, through the course of what occasional reading I have had of this translation, I prefer lord Orrery's sentiments upon this head, before his other criticisms. Perhaps, and I hope, I have a better heart for one, than I have a head for the other; or rather, which is the more probable, nature has endowed lord Orrery more in one way, than it is in the power of learning to equal in the other. I have the Latin Pliny by me, but shall not compare them together for this first reading, because my remarks are meant for you, not for the world.

I hope to hear a good account of your health, in answer to my last letter, or I shall send you off to Campania, which might then be stiled Fælix.

Farewel, my charming * Nereid! and believe me as constantly yours, as the element you bathe in ebbs and flows; though my affection only knows the

* She was at the Black-Rock.

latter; and does not, like the sea, "follow still
"the changes of the moon."

Your's,

HENRY.

LETTER CLXI.

My dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED your's from the Rock, and am excessively concerned at the account you give me about lady L——. Her death, which God forbid. I should reckon among my misfortunes; for I feel for every mishap which falls upon the worthy. You ask my opinion of lady O——'s behaviour upon this occasion; and in truth I am charmed with it. I always admire instances of fortitude most in those persons who do not affect the characters of philosophers: Because one has the best assurance, in such a case, that the part is not acted; a person who felt less than she did, would probably have acted a part more seemly, to ordinary apprehensions; as cowards turn bravos to disguise their fears.

If I fet Maidenhall, I will build somewhere on the sea-coast, my favourite situation; and rendered still more so to me by a romantick whim, that possibly I might have the happy opportunity, at some time of my life, of affording relief to persons in the highest human distress; just after a shipwreck. But from your last letter, I have a better reason to love the sea than all I have mentioned; as you say you receive benefit from it. May halcyon days attend my little King's fisher! I wish we had the same reason to require them.

I am

I am extremely angry with Kitty; such irresolution may render her life unhappy; and I think she has bid fair for it already.

In the preface to Orrery's Pliny you have a learned essay upon the Roman recesses, places of exercise, and their baths, which is an amusing treatise, considered by itself; but I don't see, at present, nor do I remember, in my former reading of the letters, any occasion for so critical a discourse on these matters; but I shall have patience, 'till I have gone more regularly thro' the work. However, the sentiment, or conclusion, he draws from the decay and ruin of these extraordinary and stupendous works of human grandeur and magnificence, shall satisfy me, tho' I should find no other purpose in the essay. See the second paragraph in the twenty-fourth page of the preface, Faulkner's edition,

"The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces, &c.

My lord then goes on, from the hint of the decay of human greatness, to consider the subject in a higher instance, and proceeds to give us a history of the first government of Rome, under the seven kings; and begins with a reflection, which shews more the goodness of his heart, than a thorough knowledge in politicks. Why may not a rabble of thieves, and vagabonds, form themselves into a civil society, submit to laws, and be passive to authority? Did not this world proceed from chaos? Does not order spring from confusion? And does not all anarchy necessarily end in some form of government? As Providence, stedfast to it's purpose, makes harmony proceed from the very war of elements. Nay, the meer necessity of the thing must have urg'd such men to this policy, for laws are more requisite among rogues, than among honest men. Plato's Common wealth, More's Eutopia, and some

other whimsical pieces of the same kind, are to be consider'd merely as political romances, for true policy flourishes independent of the morals of individuals; as discipline makes better armies than courage. I am particularly fond of Harrington's *Oceana*, taking all his works together, which proposes such an equilibrium of states, that puppets might be politick, and all the devils in hell virtuous; tho' neither by individuals, yet both with regard to the whole? Perhaps my mentioning Harrington's works, at this time, may be hazardous, as it is observ'd, that most of our travell'd young men in England, return home with Genevan principles. But take notice, that I speak to you, not to the world.

Towards the end of this preface, or essay on the life of Pliny, lord Orrery speaks of the manner he should chuse to spend the close of life; which I am particularly pleas'd with: And it is spoken like a man of sense, and virtue; but the acting according to this rational scheme is what must determine his philosophy. It was said by Solon to Croesus, that a man could not be stil'd happy, or otherwise, 'till his death: Because we are to be judg'd not by part, but the whole of our lives. Now I think, such an apothegm as this might be fram'd with regard to a man's sense, and understanding; for there are proper behaviours and decorums for every stage, and scene of life: In any of which should a man be deficient, his character is broken in upon, as much as his happiness is, from the loss of health, fortune, or honours.

Your's, thro' every stage of life.

HENRY.

LETTER CLXII.

Dear FANNY,

I AM, at present, sitting in the midst of a large field of barley, which I reaped the other day; and am taking care of the binders and stackers: There are forty-seven women and fourteen men, at work round about me, while I am reading Pliny, and writing to you.

I think lord Orrery's comment upon the seventh epistle is extremely fine. The eighth epistle of Pliny has a great nobleness of sentiment, and a particular justness of thought. I love the fine struggle between natural vanity, and the contempt of praise; which is obvious through the whole letter. It may be Stoicism, if you please; but I never will admit any pretence to virtue to be true heroism, which seems to be above human nature, 'till it has first shewn its strife with the frailties of it. The ninth epistle was always a favourite of mine: But there was a note I expected from lord Orrery upon this passage, "Thou art *almost* preferable," &c. There is no doubt but Pliny, if he had consulted his own taste and inclinations, would have left out that adverb, and put in *omnino*, or *altogether*: But the philosophers were obliged to speak of the tranquil joys of retired contemplation, and learned leisure, with some caution and reserve; either because the anti-ents had so often spoken, and written in such raptures of these pleasures, that the world had got into a kind of enthusiasm, which alarmed governments and states; and the more particularly for this reason, that those men, who are fittest for the world, are most fond of retiring from it; or else Pliny moderated his ecstatic soliloquy, because he could not think a man, who was retired from all business, could be quite so virtuous. or, at least, capable of

exercising so much virtue, as one who employed himself in the affairs of this world; for some part of the duty of a man, born a social creature, must be neglected.*

In the comment upon the last epistle, there is poetical wit in the allusion to Ajax's shield. There is an expression in the same comment, which I think exceptionable: Speaking of the young men among the Romans, he calls them *gentlemen*; which, being a modern phrase, is improperly applied, when we are speaking of the ancients.

The observations upon the eleventh epistle are very pretty, and very just; and please me particularly, because they flatter me about a sentiment you may remember of mine, that "† Absence to friends, like death to enemies, buries every fault, and enlivens every virtue."

In the last paragraph of the comment upon the 20th epistle, there is a good deal of wit and justness in the simile of lightning. There is also something extremely pretty in the annotation to the second epistle of the second book; in the allusion to the flux and reflux of the sea. The sixth epistle of the same book pleases me much. I have been always offended, when I have seen such improper and paltry distinctions at very good tables, which I have often done; and always made it a rule with myself, to take part with the despised guest, which has sometimes had the proper effect upon the entertainer.

I received your letter, with lady O——'s inclosed, and am much obliged to her for remembering me, which it seems she does, by mentioning lord ——.

I know already, that I am not to expect any thing.

* St. Bernard compares *contemplation* and *action*. So Rachel and Leah; the first was *passive*, but the latter more *fruitful*.

† Letter XXIII.

from

from her kindness, in that particular; for I mentioned to you before Mr. ——'s answer to my letter, on that head. Now as I have a way of profiting something from every disappointment in life, I shall, from this, have the satisfaction of feeling the grateful sense of lady O——'s patronage, pure and unmixed, for the friendship she designed me; whereas, had I succeeded, my acknowledgments might be looked upon rather as a rejoicing at the emoluments of it, than a gratitude for the favour itself.

Now have at her ladyship's † criss-cross——

A, then, is * * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

B is * * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

C spends his time between books, musick, and the business of his farms; has indeed an uncomfortable prospect, with regard to his fortunes; but has a certain sturdiness in his nature, which helps to keep up his spirits. He has that happy constitution and turn of mind, that contemplating every fortune or accident in this life, as he hopes to do when he is out of it, he regards each incident of it as a man should do, "at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment‡;" so that he is resolved to regulate his present actions upon that plan, which the ages, some centuries hence, (should his memory last so long) shall approve, or, at least, not condemn; when all prejudices, private interests, or partial connections, shall be no more. * * * *

† A paragraph of a letter, inquiring after three or four persons, under the characters of A, B, C, &c.

‡ Hæc laus, hic apex sapientiæ est, ea viventem appetere, quam morienti forent appetenda. SEN.

* * * * *

The fourth letter in the alphabet is, of course, D; but either the carelessness of her ladyship's typography, or my own ready adaption of the letter, has made me fix on O, which, from the figure, being the most perfect in geometry, seems to bear the nearest analogy to the person decyphered by it. O! may our loves, our joys, our days end, like the circle, as they have begun! (for I keep no record of time before our first acquaintance) and may our wishes, like that too, have but one common center!

I am concerned at your apprehensions about lady L——'s face; but more for her as a child, than as a woman: For beauty is desirable, when we can expect nothing better; but a woman may be amiable, without a symmetry of features; which I cannot instance in you, because I think you handsome; but * lady O—— may fill the example, as she was never reckoned a beauty: And may the mother's fortune attend the child, to miss a fop, and gain a man of sense!

I am sorry for the accident which happened to your eye: But, if it ends only in a blemish, I am quite easy; for *Mens sana in corpore sano* compleats all my wishes with regard to you.

I am, my dear Omicron,

Your's, from Alpha to Omega.

* Lady O—— resembles one of the statues stiled Sileni at Athens; which appeared a plain figure on the outside, but when you opened it, the form of a deity presented itself to your view.

HENRY.

"She may be compared to Solomon's tents, "They were mean without, but adorned with precious things within."

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

WHAT a scene of tranquil happiness does my dear practic philosopher's letter present me with ! How earnestly, how passionately do I wish to share those rational delights, which he can, at once, partake and inspire ! How, "*altogether preferable*" should I think it, to be seated by him on an hillock of hay, contemplating the works of nature, while he deduced each obvious effect from its first great principle ; and made me lose all wonder, in praise and gratitude to that Almighty Being, who first created, and then made him mine !

I say, how much should I prefer that happy situation to a throne, without thee, thou dearest and most charming of thy sex ! Nor will I doubt, that my sharing would enhance the pleasures of retirement ; for solitude's the nurse of love, as well as contemplation ; and I am very sure, were we to live but a few months in a calm settled way together, you would be infinitely fonder of me than you are, or can be, at present ; as I make no doubt but we should then experience the charming theory you have somewhere laid down : † "*Chearfulness without mirth, gravity without spleen, and the warmest love with the highest esteem.*"——You will perhaps be surprized, when I tell you, that I now rejoice, at what I have sometimes looked on as the greatest misfortune of my life ; that we have not yet lived together. We should have been miserable, if that had happened two years ago. It is but a very short time, since I became thoroughly acquainted with you : That knowledge has increased

† Last lines of letter CXXXVI.

my love and esteem for you. You have introduced me to myself: Need I say, that, by knowing myself, I have triumphed over my greatest † foible? And sure I cannot err greatly, after your pointing out my faults, when I declare, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have no will of my own, nor wish, but that of rendering my little self agreeable to you.— If it were not a work of supererogation, I could even wish that I had greater failings to surmount, as they would be a still stronger proof of your love and mine.

Though I remember the subject of each particular letter you mention in Pliny, I will not pretend to speak my sentiments, as I have not the books by me; if I had, I shou'd certainly start objections, for the pleasure of being refuted by you.

I have not been at the Rock these ten days: I have lain in Abby street, since I came to town, and am almost killed with raking. I shall not leave Dublin 'till Kitty does. I know you will be a little angry with this account of myself, 'till you recollect, that I have not seen her for some months, and that the greatest part of our conversation is about you; which being a subject I shall never be weary of, I cannot think of quitting it without reluctance.

With your's I received a long letter from lady O——: I think, according to your definition of it, the letter O is much better adapted to her than to me; for she is, indeed, the center of female perfection. By her desire, I inclose you lord ——'s letter. Nothing can be more elegant than your sentiments, with regard to her intentions to serve you.

† “ Her spirits kindle to a flame,

“ Men'd at the slightest touch of Mine.”

SWIFT TO STELLA.

I am

I am vastly anxious to know what you have determined about § Maidenhall.—Kitty is tearing the pen out of my hand: When shall I be able to write, or converse with you, sans interruption? I can no longer withstand the riot round me; but, though they force my hand away, my heart is unalterably your's.

FRANCES.

§ It was advertised to be set at that time.

HIATUS.

LETTER CLXIV.

YOU speak too humbly, my dear Fanny, about your person; It is, to my liking, amiable; and no comparison can render it otherwise to me, but that of your understanding: And though age, or sickness, may forfeit your common admirers,

“Best quitted with disdain;”

yet your charms, to me, must still remain: For, though the setting sun (to use a bold expression) annihilates the *shadow*, the substance still remains the same.

I am sorry you had nothing more particular to tell me, in your last, about *our lady* ———; *which* is a fond expression among the ancients, signifying a particular regard, or friendship, to any person.

I have got home the fine edition of the Spectators I promised to send you. The papers I design to make part of a collection, (hinted to you in a † former letter), which I mean to intitle, “the Solamea Miseris, or Cordial of Adversity,” are

† Letter CXVII.

numbers 210, 213, the latter part of 225, 257, 289, 312, 381, 387, 408, 447, 459, 465, 471, 487, 494, 495, 513, 519, 520, 531, 537, 543, 571, 600, 601, 615, 621, 624, 626, 628, 633, 634, and 635. There are but four papers in the *Tatlers* to be added to them : Number 89, the first part of number 170, number 135, and 211. I have not looked into the *Guardians* lately, but shall soon do it, with a view to this humane and useful work. Writings of this kind have admirable effects upon a mind rightly turned : They have quelled all ambition in me : they have reconciled me to poverty, rendered me luke-warm to fame, have comforted me in affliction, have even alleviated pain, and taken away the terrors of death : At the same time, they have enlivened my hope, enlarged my views, and opened such a glorious prospect into eternity, that the mind's eye but carelessly glances over every object, which lies intermediate to it ; yet not with such an intemperate enthusiasm, as to hinder a thorough resignation to the dispensations of Providence ; for I contemplate the joys of eternity, without any impatience for the possession of them ; which is owing to the admirable contrivance of the Almighty, who has given us such a self-conviction of the pleasures of hereafter, as may make us rest in hope ; but restrained us from such a sense of them, as might render us impatient in our wishes.

Farewel, my love ! my friend ! my oracle !

HENRY.

L E T T E R CLXV.

Dear FANNY,

AS I have not received any letter from you this post, I shall go on with my notes upon Pliny, and his translator.

I think the translation is extremely well done, and the comments both learned and ingenious; and as *they* are very full upon the text, there is but little room left for me to say any thing upon the author; so that my observations are mostly an hypercritick upon lord Orrery.

I think his lordship shews a noble sense of friendship, both the pleasures and duties of it, upon every occasion, which offers thro' this work. His comment upon the ninth epistle of the second book is what particularly puts me in mind of this, at present. The second paragraph of this comment makes a sentiment occur to me, which I think a very refined one: and which pleases me more, because it is contrary to the common sense and opinion upon that head; that "to be thoroughly generous, we should listen to acknowledgments;" as this, in a great measure, eases the grateful mind of the weight it lies under from the obligation.

The light which Pliny places Marius Priscus in (see the twelfth epistle of the same book) is very strong and remarkable. It somewhat resembles a pillory, which gives a man elevation, to be scoffed and pelted at. One who retires from ignominy may satisfy himself with the hope, that his infamy is buried in oblivion; but he who lives in the world, in the midst of shame, puts me in mind of that strong line of Pope's,

"And Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame."

There

There is a pretty turn of wit in the last paragraph of the comment upon the thirteenth epistle: and indeed lord Orrery has, in many places, shewn a great liveliness of imagination, as well as good sense, just observation, and fine morals.

The second paragraph of the comment upon the fifteenth epistle brought tears to my eyes. The exercise of all moral duties is pleasant. What a mortification then must it be, to be debarred from one of the most pleasing, filial affection; as it has both nature and religion on it's side.

I think, no man was ever born with more love of every kind in his constitution, than I was; and having the course of it interrupted thus, upon it's first current, I have often hugged a cat for a whole day, rather than suffer any part of my natural fondness to be lost. This, with some other disappointments, and discouragements which I met with, as I advanced into life, is the reason why my social affections are more general than particular; and indeed, I do not know a man who loves human nature more, or individuals less; it was this turn of mind which made me reverse Pope's simile, after the manner I hinted at in a late letter. Love, like a river, left to it's natural progression, flows constantly within it's own channel; but when it's course is opposed, it recoils upon itself for a time, swells o'er it's banks, and diffuses it's waters impartially on every side.

The paraphrase upon the sixteenth epistle is a very good one: it is a method the commentator frequently makes use of in this work, and I think it the best manner of clearing up an obscure text. I shall introduce a paraphrase of my own, upon the answer given by Socrates to the presents and generous invitations sent him by Archelaus king of Macedon. His words are only these: "I will not go to
" a man, who is able to give me more than I am
" able

“able to pay.” I thought this answer too laconick, and taking a liberty with the context of his life and discourses, I wrote the following letter, from the whole character.

“I will not accept from any man more than I can return; for the fruits of the understanding are the gifts of the spirit, and are not to be bartered. You may ask me then, why I will not afford them to you *gratis*? because they need the assistance of philosophy most, who are in misery and want; while those who feel no other want are perhaps insensible of this. You indeed seem to require that aid from me, by your offers; but such conscious humility rather proves that you esteem it's value, than that you need it's help. If you are yet to learn my science, study it in your own heart, for I profess not to teach the subtilties of the schools.”

The occasion of my writing this letter was from a method, I have always made use of, upon reading any extraordinary passage of a great man's life. I immediately lay down the book, suppose myself in the same circumstance, or situation; and meditate for some time upon the generosity of the action, or nobleness of the sentiment, which I should, or ought to have used, upon such occasion. This would be a good method for preceptors to use in the education of their young men; for we learn every thing by first pretending to it, till custom has fixed the habit.

Adieu!

LETTER CLXVI.

Dear HARRY,

I AM vastly delighted to find you so heartily engaged with Pliny and his translator; as I dare venture to pronounce them better company than any your country affords. The sentiment you mention on gratitude, is both just and elegant: and, since we are on this subject, I shall mention a doubt, that has sometimes perplexed me——Is it pride, or want of gratitude, that renders the receiving favours painful, and takes from us the power of making acknowledgments, at a time when our hearts are filled with them?

The notion of every individual's having a particular quota of love, is a thought, I would gladly indulge; as it strengthens an opinion I am vastly fond of; that we cannot love, to any great degree of passion, more than once; for though death, or the unkindness of the person belov'd, may quench the flame, it will never burn with the same brightness for another; the strength and spirit must be exhausted, and the remembrance of what we felt from the first, must be the chief support of a second passion.

You will, perhaps, think I should suppress these sentiments, as they cannot be very pleasing to me, who have given my whole stock of love to one who owns the tenderness and fervency of a prior attachment: But though considered in this light, they may give some little uneasiness, I must observe, they are sometimes of the greatest use to me. When my heart overflows with that genuine tenderness which cannot be felt for a second object, while I look on you with delight, and hear you with rapture; yet find you cold and unheedful of me: I then recollect, that it is not in your power, were I infinitely
more

more amiable, to return my love; my resentment grows cool, my jealousy vanishes, and I only, to myself, plain the misfortune of not having made the first impression on your heart.—But while I mention this allay to your love, be assured it is none to mine; for, could I, at this moment, recall my affection, I would “be frank and give it thee again.”

I very sincerely lament our being debarred the indulgence of one of the most pleasing duties of life; you cannot have so high a notion of it as I, because I for some time experienced the pleasure of loving a parent. From the loss of that happiness, I have marked a visible declension in my understanding: There was no longer any person that received delight from its improvement; I became indolent in those pursuits, which, while pointed out by a fond father, it was my utmost wish to attain. You, in some degree, supplied the loss; but the fear of not being able to render myself agreeable to you, greatly damped the effects of my strongest desire. Besides, there has been so much perturbation in my regard for you; so many doubts, fears, and resentments, as took up too much of my thoughts to leave me the power of attending to any thing else. Perhaps, by adopting the opinion of a fond father, I over rate the powers of my own understanding; they may, for ought I know, be improved to the utmost they are capable of; and I am often angry with myself, when I find my grief for his death mixed with a selfish concern for my not being as amiable as I think he would, had he lived a few years longer, have made me.

I have not any kind of idea, that the disappointments we meet from any individual, should increase our love for the generality of human kind: on the contrary, I think if such a portion of love, like life, be taken from us, it must reduce the remain-

der to a more scanty pattern. Nor can I allow your reversing Pope's simile; for I am very certain that a man, who does not love somebody, cannot love every body. *Your's* of the river I will acknowledge just; for love, obstructed in its proper channel, will swell of course; but instead of enriching and refreshing the soil through which it passes, it will destroy and lay it waste—"o'er-leap all bounds, and bear ev'n life away."

I have, for the present, lost a very great pleasure by not having Pliny by me; but while I receive your letters, I shall not regret his; and whenever I meet with them, I shall read them with more pleasure and attention than I should otherwise have done, for the sake of my dear hypercritick.

I told you in my last, that I have not been at the Rock these ten days: I cannot think of leaving Kitty while she stays, and the weather seems to favour my design; for it is by no means fit for bathing. I am concerned for the harvest in general, but more particularly for your's. I cannot yet begin at the outermost circle, but I hope I shall reach it at last. In the mean time, I grudge the few hours of fair weather we have here, and I wish I could transmit them to you; but alas! as Cloten in Cymbeline says, "I cannot lap the sun in a blanket, nor clap the moon in my pocket."

I think Socrates was in the right when he refused to receive favours he was incapable of returning. But notwithstanding your paraphrase, I look on that man who refuses to communicate the fruits of the understanding as the worst of misers, and more to be condemned than even the wretch who hoards the shining mammon, while his fellow creature perishes for want. For the person who is possessed of the gifts of fortune, may look on them as the effect of his own industry, and, like Sir Balaam, "call God's good providence a lucky hit;" but he

he who is blessed with any superiority of understanding, must esteem it the immediate gift of God, who doubtless indulged him that favour, as much for the emolument of others as himself. How then can he who hides his talent in a napkin account for it to the immediate donor, or to those who have a right to expect, but do not reap any benefit from it?—This leads me to mention what I have often wondered at, why you, who have certainly talents to execute, have never set about any publick work, which at once might be useful and transmit your name to posterity! You cannot complain of wanting leisure—indeed I think your indolence in this, unpardonable.

Lady L——'s face mends daily, and your *own* * eye quite well—When will you see it? or when shall it see you?

Adieu, my love, my life, my first, my only ever new delight, adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXVII.

Dear FANNY,

I HAVE not heard from you these three posts, and feel such an awkwardness about me as a person does, when the salute is not returned. However, this shall not discourage me from paying my debts; and I will go on to give you in quantity, what my letters fall short of yours in quality.

I have finished half my harvest, hay and barley; and when my wheat and oats are up, I shall ride post to C——, to meet Lady O—— and you there, to reap the ripe harvest of wit, sense, and

* A letter is lost, which this passage alludes to, where she had complained of an inflammation in her eye.

philosophic

philosophic leisure; though I can expect to be but a *gleaner* there.

The making use of *that* expression gives me an occasion of observing to you, that the pleasantest part of the harvest has always been to me, when the stacks are finished, and the leasers are suffered to come into the field; which they do with a loud cry of joy, disperse themselves over the furrows, and pick up very often as much corn, unavoidably scattered by the reapers first, then the binders, and stackers, as will give each of them bread enough for a week. What a pleasure did it give me, late in the evening, to sit at my window, and see them marching down my avenue, loaded with the gifts of Providence, like "Birnam wood moving to Dunsinane." I call this the *gift of providence*, because what these poor wretches gain, I could not save; and they but vindicate their harvest from the birds of the air, who will, however, find a gleaner after them too. For want of considering the matter in this proper light, my uncle was thrown into a fit of the gout at that scene, which gave me such a flow of pleasure as stream'd out at my eyes. Now I know him to be as charitable a man as I am myself; but upon this and many other occasions I have remarked, between two men of equal intrinsic virtue, the advantages which a certain accidental cast, or what we may call a lucky turn of mind, shall often give one over the other. In the instance we are upon, though I gave no more *actual* alms than he, yet I may boast a sort of passive charity from the benevolent satisfaction I felt in the mere contemplation upon the beneficence of Providence. As the leasers were singing under their loads down the avenue, I cried out to myself in a sort of rapture, with an allusion to a note of Lord Orrery's in the fourteenth epistle of the second book, "These are the Sophocleés,
" these

“ these the Laudicæni, for a man of sense, virtue, or religion !” It is upon the basis of charity that it raised the “ Monumentum ære perennius.” There go the historians who shall record your fame, when the sculptor’s chissel, or the poet’s pen shall have lost their credit. What humble pride, what mean ambition then, to be anxious for a name raised upon slighter materials than these ! a *great man’s* fame I consider as I do money, which has no value in itself, but what it receives from the consent of the people ; and is no farther useful than as it negociates things of real worth——But the *good man’s* character is like the commodities of traffick, which would preserve their intrinsic value though there were no such things as counters to negotiate them.

Adieu !

LETTER CLXVIII.
FRANCES to HENRY.

MY letters must certainly have miscarried, for I did not omit one of the posts you mention.

The transport you express at being instrumental to the happiness of your fellow-creatures, is the highest feeling of the human mind ; it is at once the strongest mark of the divinity, and the noblest and most grateful sacrifice we can make to him who gives us all, and “ in whom we live, and move, and have our being.” That heart-felt joy which arises from having done an humane, or generous act, is doubtless preferable to the giddy vanity of publick praise, which is too often bestowed on the unworthy ; yet I am far from condemning a desire of honest fame ; for I fear, that without a sense of well earned praise, the most
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virtuous among us would grow languid in the worthiest pursuits—However, it is certainly the act itself, and not the applause that attends it, which gives real satisfaction to every man of sense and virtue.

I almost envy the pleasure which the country affords to a person like you, who considers every circumstance and object in a philosophick light; every animal, insect, tree, plant, or flower, can furnish you with a much higher entertainment than what is usually found in drums, routs, balls, or assemblies. I cannot, on this occasion, forbear to mention a fear I have been some time possessed with, that by indulging this very abstracted way of thinking, you will acquire a contempt and disgust for the conversation of all, who are not blest with the same happy turn of mind. If this should happen, that abundance of love, which you say is a part of your constitution, would be confined in a very narrow compass; nay, I am much afraid, it would revert entirely on yourself; for I know few people, if any, who are at present capable of affording you any kind of delight from their company; and should you go on, increasing the refinement of your own taste, you will of course find a stronger dislike to that of others; you will then be, with regard to the world, in the same situation as mine, when in a visiting room alone, among a crowd of people, for whose understandings and manners I have perhaps a sovereign contempt—while they are more than even with me, and construe my silence and reserved behaviour into stupidity and ill breeding.

It is likely you may think this comparison vain; upon my honour I did not mean to draw any parallel between our understandings, but only to observe, that my knowledge of you has rendered
the

the generality of the world very insipid to me; and no conversation agreeable but yours. I confess, I am sorry on this account; but not for this reason only, that I am for the most part deprived of your company; and even when I enjoy it, I am in continual apprehension that mine is not elegant enough to please or entertain you.

You may judge by the numberless blots and interlineations, that I hardly know what I am doing. I think I had better lay down the pen than persist in writing nonsense, which I must necessarily do from the noise around me, unless I were deaf.

You will, I dare say, acknowledge, when you have got all my letters from the post, that the compliment you pay me would be much more justly returned by, than addressed to, me; but if I do not speak my thoughts of your letters, it is because I know no expression strong enough to describe the elegance of them, nor the pleasure which they give me.

I have heard (though not from herself) that Lady O—— intends going to England next month, to stay there two years: judge my concern, and yet I must suppress it. Lady L—— is much better, but Doctor Barry will not let her stir till she is quite well. In the mean time my impatience increases hourly to see my dear Harry; to walk with him, and talk to him, without waiting whole weeks for a reply. Such happy days we have once known, tell me, my Harry, when will they return.

Kitty does not leave us till Monday; when she goes, I shall bid adieu to every thing that has the air of gaiety, and apply myself closely to the pursuit of health and philosophy. I fear I have neglected Madam Hygeia too long, to expect she will quickly revisit me; but for wisdom, “she stands
“ is

“ in the street, and is found of all them that seek
“ her.” If I am fortunate enough to engage these
ladies company, I shall wish for no other, but
your’s.”

“ Nor fortune’s gem, ambition’s plume,

“ Nor Cytherea’s short-liv’d bloom,

“ Be objects of my pray’r! &c.”

I am, faithfully and affectionately,

Your’s,

FRANCES.

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.

